

THE

# CHRISTIAN PARLOR MAGAZINE.

SEPTEMBER, 1844.

## THE SELLING OF JOSEPH BY HIS BRETHREN.

(SEE PLATE.)

In nothing does the Providence of God appear more conspicuous than in the use made of the wicked contrivances of men to accomplish his own benevolent and wise purposes. Good is brought out of evil, curses are turned into blessings. The great Ruler of the Universe manages and directs everything with such a wise economy, that the malignity, the violence, and the carefully-studied plans of men and of devils, are all turned to account in the administration of the affairs of the world. Their designs fail of their intended effect, or, if apparently answering them, are made the means, in their ultimate result, of bringing about events the very reverse of their intentions.

In that most interesting story of Joseph, so inimitable in its simplicity and deeply-touching incidents, this overruling Providence was strikingly illustrated. Joseph was the loved son of his father—the son of his old age. He was endeared to him by the death of his mother, and, as he grew up, by that amiableness of disposition so remarkable in his whole life. His brethren were so much his seniors, that nature would have prompted them to look upon him with a tenderer affection than if he had been nearer their own age. In men advanced to middle age and themselves fathers, there was an utter want of manliness in suffering a feeling of rivalry in their breasts. But yet they could not indulge their aged father in his fond affection, and the superiority of the youth in his traits of moral character, stirred up in their hearts a

deadly malignity. That hatred which arises from envy is most bitter. No generous emotion can mingle with it, or qualify its intensity. It gangrenes the entire heart. It is in the soul a smouldering fire, until it breaks forth in full madness.

Now Joseph had dreamed a dream. While with his brethren he was binding sheaves in the field, his sheaf arose and stood upright, and their sheaves stood round about making obeisance to his sheaf. Again he dreamed that the sun, moon, and eleven stars paid homage to him. These dreams, which seemed to foretell his future elevation, were related to his brethren in the simplicity of his heart. To them they conveyed a meaning; by himself they seem to have been regarded only as curious vagaries of an imagination over which he had in his sleep no control. Yet their hearts, already cankered, and now affected by a mysterious apprehension that the envied youth was destined to become their superior, determined them by one act at once to gratify a malignant revenge, and to silence for ever their apprehensions.

To contemplate the murder of a human being, however alien to our blood, bespeaks a desperate hardness and malignity of heart. Murder is an offence from which man is restrained by the grace of God, till, in his course of wickedness, he has broken loose from all laws, and is abandoned of God for time and eternity.

The brethren of Joseph were kept from this ultimate act of hardened wickedness. They

fancied that some less extreme course would be effectual to defeat what his dreams had foreshadowed. How idly have men, in all ages, contended with their Maker! Finite minds, in their besotted stupidity measuring themselves against infinite wisdom! Man—the creature of a day—his natural vision limited to the things just around him, and his moral vision stretching not an hour into the future—madly attempting to thwart the purposes of Jehovah!

The youth is approaching them. A wearisome journey has at length brought him in sight of those for whom he had wandered over fields and through the wilderness. He had escaped the wild beasts—a new elasticity is in his steps as his eye catches a glimpse of the far-off flock, and of his brethren, their keepers. How little does he imagine what is passing in their hearts! He comes to them from an aged father to inquire of their welfare. But that father's anxiety is not to be relieved by his report. What mean those clouded brows when the youth approaches with his kindly salutations? Is this the expected return to his greetings? With the exception of Reuben they had already resolved that a neighboring pit should be the grave of the youthful dreamer—to leave him there to a torturing death by famine. But Reuben in his better purpose had resolved to make this pit the means of his deliverance. Yet if Joseph believed his brethren were seriously bent on his destruction, both himself and his eldest brother were alike disappointed. Those were at hand who, with equal readiness, would make merchandize of spices and of human sinews. In the pit it is scarcely possible but the young man looked for deliverance, and was buoyed up by the hope of a speedy return to his fond father. But now slavery stares him in the face—a life of banishment from every early endearment, and of bondage and degradation with no heart of sympathy at hand. To be made merchandize of by those whom he loved—whom he looked to as protectors—for whom his heart beat with the warmth of youthful affection—this was so strange—so unnatural! He appeals to them by every motive—by their common blood—by the grey hairs of his and their father. His tears—his entreaties—his humble, touching prayers call up no relentings. This is the iron-nerved hate of which envy is the parent. Joseph is sold and borne to a distant land to end his days in dishonored bondage. So at least thought those who should have dared every hazard for his protection.

Now what shall become of the dreams of this dreamer? Under the power of a master, and far distant from his kindred, will the sheaves and the eleven stars, bowing to him in his dreams, ever be realized in the lowly obeisance and humble submissions of these envious brethren? And yet that very sale of Joseph was made, by an unseen, guiding hand, a step towards that very superiority which they so much dreaded. The brethren parted—the one into bondage—the others to break the heart of their father and silence his hopes by a wickedly fabricated tale. All felt their parting to be final. But change the scene. A famine is sent upon the land of Canaan to drive these shepherds into the land of Egypt. They go in their distress as suppliants. The granaries of Pharaoh overflow with corn. They have been filled by the provident care of one who only on the throne is below the monarch of the Empire. To this man, the governor of all Egypt, the sons of Jacob bow in lowly reverence. *He* holds their lives in his hands. He is clothed in purple robes, and administers the affairs of a mighty kingdom with unresisted authority. They are lowly shepherds. They could not endure to bow to a youthful brother—the very thought drove them to madness. But they willingly bend the knee before the ruler of Egypt. They stop not to inquire his age or his lineage. It is enough that the sceptre of Pharaoh is in his hands, and that in his abundance the family of Jacob may find an ample supply for their wants. There are no envyings towards this princely governor. He is too far above them for envy to reach—too independent to need their good will. *Him* they can reverence—*him* they feel it no degradation to approach as suppliants. He imprisons one of them, and holds him as a hostage for their return with Benjamin. They feel at once their own littleness and his greatness. And yet this man, unenvied in his royal power, and commanding reverence by the dignity of his person and his station—this man is Joseph whom they sold into bondage. Themselves the sheaves and the eleven stars have made a willing obeisance to him. They, though with most wicked intentions, have helped to work out the decrees of the Almighty—they sold him into slavery; but *He* who laughs at the short-sightedness of human contrivances had made him a prince and a ruler—their was the wickedness and weakness of contrivance—God's the glory of a wisely and benevolently accomplished purpose.

## "MOTHER! I SEE IT!"

BY ADELIA MORTON.

I HAD a sister once, a blooming child  
Of six years old. Her voice was sweeter far  
Unto my ear than are melodious lutes,  
Or e'en the harp's sweet tone from silver strings;  
And in her eye there played a beauteous ray  
That seemed the spirit-light that lit her soul  
With pure and holy gleaming; it was touched  
With love's celestial fire, and sweetly shed  
Its winning glance in childhood's joyous hours;  
Her glossy curls in flowing ringlets fell  
Upon her snowy neck, and in her heart  
Were found the springs of innocence and love.

She was a pious child. Her infant voice  
Tuned oft its glad song of grateful praise,  
And warbled adoration forth to Heaven;  
Or bowing down she sought by humble prayer  
To drink at life's unfailing fount above—  
To have her spirit sanctified, and drest  
In angel's robes, spotless and pure as they.  
She did not ask in vain: methinks she quaffed  
Life's more than nectar draught—immortal bliss,  
And turning back to earth, its waters fell  
In radiant drops of holiness and love,  
That sparkled in the ray of joy and peace.

She was not long for earth. If angels come  
To bear above the spirit pure and bright  
To give it to its author—and to claim  
His blest companionship in Heaven; to wing  
The image of its God from earthly dross  
To where no sin nor taint corrupts its form,  
But fadeless as the ray from Heaven's own  
springs  
Keep it unsullied for its Master's use,  
They did it then! Disease its havoc made,  
And Death, stern sovereign of the mortal life,  
Poised his unerring dart, and sent it home.

Her death was calm and holy. Not a sigh  
Escaped her lips; no sorrowing tone was heard  
At Death's approach; but waiting to be gone  
She longed to hear her Maker call her home.  
At last she heard the summons—Faith then held  
Her angel hand to bear her safe across

Death's chilly waters—Hope rekindled up  
Her guiding star, and, hasting to its home,  
Her spirit, ravished with the brightening ray  
Of Heaven's eternal Paradise, exclaimed,  
"MOTHER! I SEE IT!" as her parting word,

"The angels invite me away  
To the land which is tearless and pure,  
Where the clouds never shadow the ray,  
But where glory and peace shall endure;  
They call me to realms of delight  
Where Jesus my Saviour is seen,  
Where spirits are stainless and bright  
In bowers of bliss ever green.

"I see it—Immanuel's throne,  
Where my Saviour is waiting for me,  
And I haste from this world to be gone  
That I my redemption may see:  
I want to adore him supreme  
From whom no allurement can sever—  
In the light of his life-giving beam  
To love and enjoy him for ever.

"I see it—the crown he has won  
To give me when I shall be there,  
And robes which the light of the sun  
Would fade in, were I to compare;  
I see it, and Jesus is mine,  
I give Him my spirit again,  
And trusting His promise divine  
I say to His bidding Amen!"

Long years have passed since then, but memory  
still,  
True to her trust, brings back the tearful hour  
When that one link was broken! But I trust  
'Tis not for ever! Oh, what speechless joy  
Should fill that spirit which can look on high,  
And with the eye of Faith, in humble hope  
Of God's eternal promise, can behold  
The spirit sanctified and pure in bliss,  
Renewing bonds which death has severed here,  
But there to be united ne'er to end.

## MORALITY OF THE "BOZ" LITERATURE.

BY REV. F. C. WOODWORTH.

A KIND of fiction has sprung up during a few years, which may be denominated "the Boz literature." At the head of the school is Charles Dickens, who has produced as great a sensation in the novel-reading world, as almost any man since the days of Sir Walter Scott. Few novel-writers have had such a host of imitators. His plots, his characters, his style, his peculiar cant phrases, have been copied by second-rate aspirants to literary fame, and he has been very generally regarded as not only an amusing and harmless writer, but as a teacher of wholesome morality in a pleasant way. We Americans, who are somewhat over-fond of foreign talent, while we are inclined to undervalue the literary efforts of our own countrymen, have been perfectly insane in our devotion to him. When he came to our shores, we were not content to applaud his genius, as the brightest star in that particular constellation of literature, but we told him he was the greatest philanthropist of his times—a second Howard—a man who had conferred untold benefits upon his species. This was doubtless startling news to Dickens. It never had occurred to him before that he had done so much good. While he had been writing his novels and novelettes, under the influence of his cigar and his brandy and water, the thought never entered his mind that he was actuated by the purest and most exalted philanthropy. He fancied he had been writing for fame and money. We told him better. We sent him home with the conviction that he was a sort of demi-god, and that about all the genuine love of humanity in the world was held in trust for his species by Charles Dickens, Gent.

How well that great moralist repaid our laudation, when he returned to his native land, it is quite unnecessary to say. It may be an unwarrantable digression to allude to it. Moreover, it is a delicate subject. Nobody likes to hear about it, and we will let it pass. Since, however, so much has been said about the good moral influence of the books of this same Mr. Dickens, the philanthropist, we have a mind to analyze them a little, a very little, and show how much they are really worth as lessons of morality. We believe their influence in this respect is pernicious, and we will give the rea-

sons for this belief. And let it be premised, that what is true of the master is true of all the disciples. A more servile set of imitators never existed than those of the Dickens school. *Ex uno disce omnes.*

1. The writings of Dickens have an immoral tendency, because *they are unfriendly to spiritual religion.* In all of them there cannot be found any such thing as an approval of genuine piety. Indeed, Mr. Dickens hardly speaks of a God, much less of a Redeemer, at all. We shall perhaps be met with the objection, while the fact will not be denied, that this negative omission, however culpable and unhappy, affords no positive influence against religion. But this is a mistake. When an author makes his characters, after a very imperfect life, pass into eternity peacefully and happily, without any Saviour to sustain them, and teaches that a mere worldly philosophy will make any one die in triumph, he does exert an influence unfriendly to spiritual religion, and consequently to sound morality; or if he does not, no thanks are due to him. No one who has read Dickens, needs to be told that this is the way his heroes and heroines die.

But this is not the only method he takes to show his opposition to the religion of the heart. He takes pains sometimes to throw it into ridicule—the most effective method, frequently, of injuring the cause of God. This attack on religion may not be premeditated. There may be really no great malice about it; and it is no matter, so far as the influence is concerned, whether there be any. Doubtless he speaks out the honest sentiments of his heart, without any design. And just here lies the danger of trusting any depraved and unprincipled man to write on moral subjects for the mind, and especially the mind of the young; for "out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh."

2. There is in the works of Dickens a *strong current of opposition to the principles of temperance.* This does not seem to be in accordance with the most exalted philanthropy, to say the least. In this respect the Boz literature is nearly all faulty, and must do harm. Suppose Dickens does not harangue against sobriety in so many words. We see plainly enough his repugnance to the practical means employed to promote the principles of temperance, and there



are many ways of throwing odium on the cause, besides direct attack. If we desired to ruin a young man by means of the intoxicating cup, we would not read lectures on the beauties of intemperance and debauchery to him. We would not attempt to convince him what a blessed creature that must be which would "steal away his brains." We would make him familiar with the convivial club, and teach him that the best society belongs to it; that it is genteel and reputable to indulge in drinking, and that men and women who are conscientiously pledged to abstain are all a set of low, mean, narrow-minded fanatics. That would be the way most likely to secure an unsuspecting victim, according to our notion; and that is just the way that our so-called philanthropist chooses. With what a grace his heroes—his immaculate heroes—quaff their wine and strong drink! What an air of decorum and nobleness of soul there seems to be about the bacchanalian revel! Who would not learn to relish the social glass? And good Mr. Dickens himself, how he delights in that delicious "brandy and water." With what wonderful sang-froid he holds up the tumbler, and eyes the nectar within! And then with what grace and professional ease he brings it to his lips, drinks the health of a gentleman—a very jovial, generous, high-souled gentleman—and finally tosses off its entire contents, to his infinite satisfaction! What a delightful specific brandy and water must be, and how cheerless this world would become, if one could not drink and smoke cigars! Oh, there is nothing like drinking and smoking to drive away care and cure the heart-ache. Such is the impression which the writings of "Boz" are calculated to make on the mind of the reader. Now in all this is there no bad moral taught; and is there no tendency, by throwing a charm around the cup, to lead the young away from the paths of sobriety? Nay, if Charles Dickens had desired to make drunkards, and had set himself in earnest about the task, could he have taken a more wise and appropriate course?

3. The morals of Dickens' writings are in our view very generally exceptionable in another respect. We allude to his *so frequent description, in detail, of some of the lowest and worst features of vicious society.* What is the tendency of habitual familiarity with vice? We believe it is evil, and almost only evil; and for this belief we have a host of indisputable facts, and the testimony of many sensible and good men, as well as the evidence of analogy. Some two

years since, the inspectors of prisons in England presented a report, in which was a collection of facts illustrating the demoralizing effects of what may be called "felon literature." It is stated in this report that a vast number of malefactors were found, on examination, to have been first misled by reading such works, and the particular cases are given in detail. The effect of familiarity with scenes of vice, especially on the minds of the young, is to blunt the moral sensibility, and by sympathy to excite the evil passions and deprave the heart.

The mind of Mr. Dickens seems to gloat on these disgusting pictures of human life. He compels us almost constantly to keep company with the vilest dregs of society, and we must listen to their low conversation, and witness their revolting dissipation and debauchery.

We think, then, we are warranted in the conclusion that, whatever may be the literary merits of Dickens' works, the moral tendency of them is, on the whole, too pernicious to allow of their safe introduction into a virtuous family—that though not so bad as many other novels, they are yet far too bad to be encouraged by the Christian community.

We should be among the last to refuse to Dickens the award he deserves as an author. There is much in his style to be admired. At times, when the dignity of his subject requires it, there is a richness, a chasteness, a touching, simple beauty about some of his paragraphs, which one rarely meets with among the best writers of prose, in the English language. Then the moral influence of much that he has written would be most happy, were it disconnected entirely with other and more exceptionable matter. We are not blind to the excellences, whether of style or sentiment, that are so much applauded in the works of Dickens. We trust we should not be blind to them, were the objectionable features we have noticed much more marked and numerous, and though he should slander everything American a hundred fold worse than he has done. But may not the very excellence of some portions of his works tend to make them more pernicious as a whole? Is not poison—physical poison—more dangerous in combination with other substances that are pleasant to the taste and nutritious, than when unadulterated—more dangerous, because more palatable, and consequently more likely to be received into the system? And when received, would its virulent action be prevented by the delicious and healthful ingredients with which it was compounded?

Some people—men of good sense and discretion, too—seem to have a very singular way of deciding whether the moral influence of a book is good or bad. They take it to pieces, examine carefully all its parts, put all its wholesome moral lessons in one scale, and its moral impurities and obliquities in another, and determine whether the book is to be welcomed to the bosoms of their families, or banished from their society, by the scale that preponderates. But we must beg to dissent from any such standard of judging. If the mind of a youth receive the germ of a vicious sentiment, it is no offset to that sentiment to inculcate a lesson of virtue; and if by the recital of tales of depravity and vice, the finer sensibilities have become blunted, the heart rendered cold and callous to the claims of humanity, and the leprosy of moral pollution

have begun its work of death in the soul, of how much value are a score of pretty sayings about honesty, and benevolence, and generosity, and the whole sisterhood of virtues?

That the works of Dickens are liable to the objections we have stated, no candid reader of them will deny. The only question is, of what weight these objections ought to be, and this question different individuals will answer differently. But will men and women of stern principle—will Christians, with a knowledge of these facts, consent to tolerate all the evil of these works, for the sake of the good they find in them? For the honor of religion, for the sake of humanity, and morality, and virtue, we hope that they, at least, will seek a purer literature than that of Charles Dickens and his satellites.

## NOTICES OF NORTHERN RUSSIA.

BY C. W. BAIRD.

A work of much interest has recently appeared in Russia, a translation of which has been published in Paris.\* The author was sent by the Russian government in 1820, in company with other gentlemen of distinction, on an expedition to Northern Siberia, among the tribes dwelling on the coast of the Arctic Sea. Of this important and interesting book we will give some notices.

While the northern coast of America had been explored by Ross, Parry, and Franklin, the geography of Northern Asia was but little known. The first voyage made to the coast extending between the Straits of Behring and the Sea of Karsk was performed in 1580, by two Englishmen, Peto and Jackman. Since that time several voyages have been made thither; at one time by a Cossack chief, sent there for the purpose of subjecting some tribe to the fur tax; at another time by a member of some geographical and commercial society. These made some new discoveries, but the result of their researches was far from being satisfactory.

\* *Le Nord de la Sibirie, voyage parmi les peuplades de la Russie Asiatique et dans la Mer Glaciale, entrepris par ordre du gouvernement Russe, et executé par MM. de Wrangell, Matouchkine et Kozmine. Paris, 1842.*

Little was known of those countries save the mere outline of the coast. The Emperor Alexander resolved, therefore, to send two officers of the navy for the purpose of making new researches in those regions. This expedition, at the head of which was M. de Wrangell, was to visit the countries near the mouth of the Kolima River. A residence of four years in the polar regions is so rare, that the twenty years which have elapsed since have not at all diminished its interest. Besides, as the manners and customs of the tribes which dwell there depend essentially on the phenomena of that severe climate, they are always the same.

After having crossed Mount Oural, or, as the natives call it, *the belt of stone*, the traveller enters Siberia, the capital of which is Irkoutsk. This city is the limit of civilisation. After making the necessary preparations, M. de Wrangell embarked on the majestic Lena, one of the largest rivers of Europe. In twenty-seven days he reached Yakoutsck, a city of four thousand inhabitants, where, in the middle of July, there was no sign of summer, except the absence of snow. Yakoutsck is the centre of a considerable part of the commerce of Northern

Siberia. Farther on, it is seldom that the traveller meets with beaten roads, and generally he is obliged to travel on horseback. A long rope stretches from the head of each horse to the tail of the preceding one. Two guides, the one before and the other behind the line, take care of the procession; and thus about twenty-five miles are daily travelled.

Passing along a forest of mulberry and pine trees, M. de Wrangell remarked several trees whose large trunks were covered with tufts of horsehair; many sticks, decorated in the same manner, were standing around them. The guide who directed the troop stopped at this place, tore some hair from his horse's mane, and placed it on the trunk of one of these trees with great appearance of devoutness; he then said with joyful looks that this offering made sure the protection of the *Spirit of the forests*, and that thenceforth their expedition would be fortunate. The superstition of the guides did not end here; for, that the goodwill of the Spirit might be more certain, they continually celebrated, in their sad and monotonous songs, the imagined beauties of those regions which they supposed were subject to its rule.

The Yakoutes (such is the name of the inhabitants of this country) are of the race of Tartary; all their wealth consists in the horses and flocks of horned cattle which they own. Accustomed to the cold, they seem not to feel it, and use scarcely any means to protect themselves from it. In their travels, they spread the cloth which covers their horses on the snow, wrap themselves up in their overcoats, stretch themselves on this bed, and sleep profoundly in a season when the cold is of twenty or thirty degrees. Their summer dwellings are kinds of tents, of a conical shape, made of the bark of a tree, fastened to a frame; they live a wandering life, and, while their flocks are in their pastures, they make their provision of hay for the winter. During the latter season they live in huts covered with a thick coat of sods, straw, and clay, into which light enters only by two little holes, in which they place pieces of ice instead of glass. Though most of the Yakoutes have been baptized, and though several portions of the Gospel have been translated into their language, they perform many pagan ceremonies, and they place a blind confidence in the sorcery of their *chamans*. These people are of a dissimulating, quarrelsome, and vindictive character. After the traveller has passed the chain of the Verkho Yansk mountains, distances of many miles separate the various dwellings; this

dispersion is not occasioned by the want of sufficient pasture, but by the unsociable disposition of the inhabitants. In their meetings, however, they make up for their long isolation by interminable tales; the Siberians are great story-tellers, and they frequently alter the truth for the sake of rendering their narrations more interesting.

The chain of the Verkho Yansk mountains divides the flow of the waters of the Lena and Yana; towards the south, the pine and larch grow, while towards the north the cedar, the poplar, and the willow are seen. To cross these mountains is the most difficult part of the journey from Yakoutsck to Nijne-Kolimsck. Beyond them, in the midst of an extensive plain, is the small city of Zachiversk, where, at that time, was still living a venerable priest, Father Michael. "During more than sixty years, in which," says M. de Wrangell, "he has fulfilled his mission, he has been instrumental in converting to Christianity by the power of the Word, and by his virtuous example, more than fifteen thousand Yakoutes, Tougouses, and Youkaquires, whose manners and habits he has been enabled to change. At present, notwithstanding his advanced age, he makes his annual journey, and travels many hundred miles on horseback; that is, he visits all the villages of his vast parish, to communicate the Divine Word, to console the afflicted, to distribute alms to the poor, and to help the sick." What a life of self-denial! We admire it the more because it is unknown, and finds its only recompense in the work of devotion which it accomplishes.

Beyond the great lake of Orinkine, all bears the signs of desolation; the traveller crosses immense marshes, whose surface is merely dried, not consolidated, during the summer; a thick layer of ice which never melts, is a few feet below it; and this alone preserves the traveller from the dangers which he would have to pass through during that season; but it was in October, when the cold was of 24 degrees, that M. de Wrangell crossed this region. As the Kolima is approached the scenery becomes less severe; however, soon the forests disappear entirely: and nothing but a few shrubs and bushes are met with. The latter part of the journey is accomplished with great rapidity in sledges drawn by dogs. After two hundred and twenty-four days of travelling, the expedition reached the miserable village of Nijne-Kolimsck, which was to be the centre of its operations for three years.

The severity of the climate is very great in



the environs of the Kolima River. It freezes from the 20th of August to the beginning of September, and does not break loose from its icy bondage till the first days of June. It is true that the sun remains constantly on the horizon at Nijne-Kolimsk for fifty-two days, from the 15th of May to the 6th of July; but it rises so little above it that it merely gives light, but no heat. In July, myriads of mosquitoes appear, and are very annoying; however, these insects are of great benefit to the inhabitants; for they drive thousands of reindeer from the forests and force them to repair to the sea-shore, where the winds disperse the mosquitoes, and where the hunters are prepared to kill great numbers of the deer. The fogs which arise from the sea at the time when it freezes, make the climate more tolerable in October; but the cold then increases, and sometimes attains forty degrees in January. A night of thirty-eight days begins on the 22d of November; it would be insupportable, were it not for the brightness of the reflection, the brilliancy of the snow and the strong light of the Aurora Borealis. The beauty of the animal race presents a striking contrast to the desolate state of vegetation; but the variety of species, and the great number of individuals, leaves the landscape inanimate. "All shows here," says M. de Wrangell, "that the limits of the habitable world have been passed, and one tries in vain to understand how men should have crossed them to dwell in such solitudes." The male population of the district of Kolimsk is, nevertheless, 325 Russians and Cossacks, 1,034 Yakoutes, and 1,139 Youkaquires and men belonging to other tribes.

Spring is the most difficult season for those living on the shores of the Kolima. The produce of the fisheries in the autumn is consumed by that time, and famine appears under the most frightful aspect. M. de Wrangell witnessed this three times. Then immense flocks of swans, geese, ducks, and other fowl, arrive in time to save the people; the fish, which were forced by the severity of the season to seek deeper water, are caught in nets stretched under the ice—which, when it breaks, causes frequently sudden inundations.

The winter is mostly spent in the interior of the dwellings, to which a small door leads, which is covered with a bear's or reindeer's skin; it is lighted by a lamp filled with grease. All around the hut are the dogs, half buried in the snow, who, four times a day, and oftener when it is moonlight, interrupt the general silence by their horrid cries. Who could believe that, notwithstanding the climate, the absence of day, and the deprivations of all kinds to which they are subject, the inhabitants have a satisfied appearance, and are in some degree happy?

It is near the village of Potbischa that the flocks of reindeer are in the habit of crossing the Aniouy River when they fly from the mosquitoes which infest the forests in summer, and go to find a refuge on the shore of the ocean, and when they return thence in autumn. The produce of the fisheries is not sufficient to nourish the population, and their existence depends, in a great measure, on this chase of reindeer. In the spring, while the Aniouy is yet frozen, it can only be accomplished by means of the gun and the bow and arrow; in autumn, the Youkaquires, in their boats, attack and kill the reindeer when they are swimming across the river; a good hunter can thus kill more than a hundred of them in half an hour. But sometimes the reindeer do not come. Mr. Matiouckine witnessed the impression produced on the people when they learned that this had happened on the river which he was visiting, and that an immense herd which had appeared, instead of crossing the river, went off to the mountains. "Gladness," he says, "left them, and despair filled their hearts; it was fearful! for death threatened these poor wretches. The women and children were wringing their hands, and the air resounded with their lamentable cries; rolling themselves upon the snow, they dug it out, as if to prepare a tomb."

The travellers continued their journey as far as the shores of the Arctic Sea; and the relation of their discoveries and the dangers they passed through, forms a very interesting part of this work, which we would notice more fully had we the time and the space necessary.



## THE POETRY AND POETS OF AMERICA.

"What institutions," said the Japanese Emperor to a European traveller, "what institutions have you in your country for making poets?" "Sire," replied the traveller, "we have a beautiful earth, a beautiful sky, and a holy religion."

This answer, as philosophical as felicitous, might be returned by our countrymen to the doubters on the other side of the Atlantic, in our own fatherland, if their questioning of our poetical capabilities did not originate in a prejudice sterner and more invincible than Japanese ignorance. The arrogant incredulity of British critics, which a few years ago demanded "who reads an American book?" has to be sure very considerably lowered its tone; and they concede, sometimes directly, and sometimes by fraudulent appropriation to themselves of our literary produce, that we have uttered some very tolerable prose. Whether America ever has or ever will distinguish itself in the walks of poetry remains with them a question.

There are some considerations worth our notice, which, *a priori*, would strongly indicate a distinguished eminence in imaginative and poetic fame among the glowing prospects of this young country, and justify the prediction that by the broad streams, amid the solemn forests and cloud-crowned mountains, and the boundless prairies of this western world, the harp of poetry would be new strung, and, vibrating to the touch of masters trained amid the magnificent greatness and splendors of nature, would yield its sweetest harmonies and sublimest numbers. We all know how much external nature has to do with awakening and developing the poet's soul. What indeed is that peculiarly fitting and forming education, which reveals the poet to himself and to the world, which etherealizes, warms and elevates his spirit, and touches his lips with hallowed fire, and fills his soul with thoughts that burn for utterance like a prophet's message? What is it but the impress and the inspiration of Nature, working around him in her multiform operations and movements, and breathing upon him her silent, subduing and kindling influence. It is nature, sincerely loved and watchfully observed, and passively, gently yielded to with a child's reverence, that half creates the poet. He hears new music in the flow of waters, in the waving of tree-tops, in the voices of birds, in the low breathing winds of summer; sees her greatness in storms and heaving oceans and wild tornadoes, and is touched with her beauty in flowers and green

fields and living forms of loveliness and grace, and he feels

"A presence that disturbs him with the joy  
Of elevated thoughts; a sense sublime  
Of something far more deeply interfused,  
Whose dwelling is the light of setting suns,  
And the round ocean, and the living air,  
And the blue sky, and in the mind of man;  
A motion and a spirit that impels  
All thinking things, all objects of all thought,  
And rolls through all things. Therefore is he  
still

A lover of the meadows, and the woods,  
And mountains, and of all that we behold  
From this green earth."

In all ages and nations the muses have had their supposed chosen retreats. Pindus and Pierus, Helicon and Parnassus, the fountains Castalia and Hippocrene, the honored haunts of their election, were thus distinguished in heathen mythology, only because in such spots, nature disclosed her loveliness or her grandeur, and invited to freer, nearer communion the imaginative mind of her child and disciple. This was the hidden esoteric sense of the mythus of the muses, that the poetic spirit must draw its inspiration from the unveiled bosom of nature, and by beholding her face to face in her retirement, and dwelling apart with her in her own bright and clear element, become by a transforming and transfusing process, a living harp, to utter her deep harmonies in the dwellings and to the listening hearts of men. Nature is thus to him, what she has been in every age, the only true and everlasting muse.

With this truth admitted of the influence of external nature in the formation of mind and in the quickening of the imaginative powers, what may we not expect from it in our own land with its bland yet bracing temperature, its benignant sky, and its glorious panorama of forests, mountains, prairies, rivers, lakes and seas, on a scale of magnificence, and in a style of splendor and beauty entirely its own. Nature did much for Greece and Italy, but she has done infinitely more for America, and as by an ordinance of nature the mind assimilates itself to the objects with which it is conversant, it is not unreasonable to look for the ripest, richest fruits from intellects trained and nurtured among natural scenery so grand, diversified, beautiful and sublime. The feelings and sentiments of poetry find their natural aliment and home in

such a country. The lyre and the harp were invented among the mountains of Thessaly; what wonder if their most perfect and thrilling strains shall be heard echoing among the mountains of America, or floating along her vales and streams.

It were a trifling consideration, if true, to be alleged that as yet no great poets have appeared among us. Rome had been built 500 years before she had one considerable poet. And hitherto the mind of this country has been by the force of circumstances otherwise occupied than in elegant literature and devotion to the muses. We have been of necessity a practical and working people, and yet we are not ashamed to offer the names of our Danas, Bryants, Longfellow, Spragues, Hallecks, and many others, for comparison with the best British poets who have written during the last twenty-five years. On this point we shall have occasion for additional remarks in the progress of this article.

II. In the second place, the free political institutions of this country greatly favor the generous nurture and development of poetic genius. Poesy and Freedom, have they not ever been companions and playmates, nestling together in the same mountain eyrie, invigorated by the same free breeze, and walking forth hand in hand with intertangled tresses over the same smiling fields? So intimately related are they that they seem but one. What indeed is practical freedom but the realized vision and prayer of poesy? And what influence is there worse for mind and all its great capabilities than that of an enthralling, benumbing political power? It is and always has been the great antagonist, and too often the successful one of ennobled, of aspiring and expanding intellect, ruling it an outlawed thing when it would not be rendered parasitical and subservient, bending the supple hinges of the knee to the will of despotism, and meanly cringing to the hest of iron power. Oppression, in its two principal forms, political and ecclesiastical, has thus far in all ages and countries crushed and smothered genius, or created an atmosphere in which it could not freely breathe. Mean things have trodden down the noble; the sordid have overridden the generous, the free, the high-thoughted. All despotism, but chiefly ecclesiastical, is in essence vulgar, selfish, malignant and exclusive, and conspires against the greatness and free utterance of lofty mind. It would reduce all men to become machines turned by a single crank, or brutes reined and guided by a single bit. This unblessed and withering

experiment on the human spirit is, we trust, never to be made on any extensive scale in this country. We trust we have the elements and the spirit of a substantial freedom settled among us. The genius of liberty abides here, and at a blast from her bugle, her children start like the war-clad clansmen of Roderick Dhu from their glens and fastnesses, and every vale, and hill-lock, and mountain slope teems with radiant men. We have faith to believe that the days of oppression are numbered, though its heavy shadows retire reluctantly, slowly; that the millenium of freedom is begun, and that henceforth, and in this land a literature free as the air, and asking no *imprimatur* from lords temporal or spiritual, will continue to bless us with its fruits. We hold it not unlikely indeed that there may yet be many a struggle for the maintenance of the rights of the mind, yet that those very struggles will be the means of intellectual development in its noblest forms, we are taught by all past experience to expect.

III. The religious character and tendencies of this country foretoken for it an elevated poetical fame. No correct estimate of our future literature can be made without noting the activity and influence of the religious principle upon the heart and mind of the nation. The literature and the religion of a people are as intimately related as cause and effect. In the case of a people wedded to a false and worn out religious faith, it is nearly certain that no strenuous mental efforts, especially in eloquence and poetry, will grace their history. The explanation is easy. Poetry is the utterance of our inner, higher nature, it is a voice from the depths of our being, it is music stealing from the hidden heart, elicited by the truth permeating and warming it, like the fabled music of Memnon struck by the ray of morning. It comes forth from those depths in us where belong our ideas and presentiments of immortality and the infinite, where are felt by the living spirit the unappeasable longings for the good, the beautiful, the true, the eternal. The religious principle, or, if you like it better, the religious susceptibility or craving is there, waiting for the light to shine down into it, to awaken it and make it vibrate celestial and audible harmonies, worthy of an instrument of God as it is. Our highest powers, the most delicate and sensitive that belong to us, like flower plants amid cold, dark ruins, withhold their fragrance and beauty, till piercing some crevice, a ray of sunshine enters, and uncoiling themselves they emerge where it broke in, and spread their tendrils pale

and weakly to the breeze and the orient beam, and thence drink in life and joy, and become part of the poetry of nature. What the light and air are to the sickly plant or flower, that the influence of religion is to poetic genius; it is its aliment, and life, and joy—the spirit predestined to educe from its chaos and darkness, a world of order, light, and beauty.

And is it not signally true, and worthy of our thankful acknowledgment, that to the American mind is allotted the blessed privilege of a training specially auspicious and hopeful in this regard? In no country in the world is religion less embarrassed in its transmission to the heart, or in its interspersion with those commanding influences which mould the national character and destiny, and give enlargement and dignity to the movements of mind.

"Poesy baptized

In the pure fountain of eternal love  
Has eyes indeed; and viewing all she sees  
As meant to indicate a God to man  
Gives him *his* praise, and forfeits not her own."

They become mutually helpful, and shed grace and glory upon each other.

It may not be amiss, however, to remark, that the religion of which we speak as necessary to kindle and control the poetic fire, must itself be earnest and fervid, quite unlike that heartless, stupid, frozen thing, with which we are all familiar. It must come not in the dry, pedantic divisions of the divinity school, but in the living, leaping earnestness and joy of its own nature, and furnish nutriment and appeals to our highest and profoundest sentiments, and breathe upon our deepest nature, our heart of hearts, and fan open its innermost folds. It is impossible, says an eminent American writer, "not to discern an increased fervor of mind in every department of life, and this character is stamped very strongly on the literary productions of the age. Fiction is no longer a mere amusement, but transcendent genius, seizing upon this province of literature, turns it from a toy into a mighty engine, and under the light tale, is breathing through the community either its reverence for the old or its thirst for the new, communicating the spirit and lessons of history, unfolding the operations of civil and religious institutions, and defending or assailing systems of education and morals, by exhibiting them in life and action. The poetry of the age is equally characteristic. It has a deeper and more impressive tone than comes to us from what has been called the Augustan age of

English literature. The regular, harmonious, elaborate strains of Pope and his contemporaries, are regarded as playing too much on the surface of nature and the heart. We demand a more thrilling note, a poetry which pierces beneath the exterior of life to the depths of the soul, and which lays open its mysterious workings, borrowing from the whole outward creation, fresh images and correspondences with which to illuminate the secrets of the world within us. Extravagances of imagination and violations of taste and moral sentiment are easily forgiven when conjoined with what awakens strong emotion. Hence the importance of a powerful religious influence, to conserve as well as quicken the poetic character, in the progress of the fervid civilisation of our times and country; and it is cheering to believe that an administration of Christianity, better tempered to human nature and adapted to its development and control, is taking the place of the old, crabbed, heartless, denunciatory fanaticism, of one sort, and the worldly apathy of another, which have been so long in vogue.

IV. But says the objector, "one grand element is wanted for the nurture of the poetical character in America; she has no traditions. She started at once into life, rude, rugged, savage, self-confident. She has nothing to fall back upon in her history—no age of gold—no fabulous antiquity—no fairy land, out of which to carve a national poetry." The *Foreign Quarterly*, in an article on this subject which would disgrace the most scurrilous diurnal in New York, whines dolorously over our newness as fatal to our poetical aspirations. We have even no modes of dress to revive—no grandmother's hoops—no voluminous wig, no buckles, no ruffs. A distressing case truly, if we could but be made to feel it, as at present we do not. We are accustomed to regard our past as anything but a blank and an oblivion. Our history, colonial and independent, may have little that is interesting, much less poetical, to a venal, one-sided, bragging Englishman, though if he had the wit as well as the grossness of Falstaff, he would in self-defence laud the courage of those who have *whipped him* time and again. We can assure our crabbed old neighbor, over the water, without any desire to sour the beer on his stomach, that we are well enough off for historical glory to spare his sympathy. If we have no fabulous age, we have volumes of facts stranger than fiction—we have historic names fresh as the ungathered flower; already



"We give in charge

Their fame to the sweet lyre. The historic muse,  
Proud of her treasure, marches with it down  
To latest times; and sculpture in her turn  
Gives bond in stone and ever during brass,  
To guard them and to immortalize her trust."

No, the spirit of poesy needs no obscure mythology, no dusky past, no feigned demi-gods and imaginary deeds of daring to fall back upon. The simple, truthful, unadorned annals of the country, are sufficiently romantic and exciting, for the loftiest imagination; and we can dispense with the inspiration of old wives' tales and puerile legends. We have no occasion to people our solitudes with goblins borrowed from the old world, or our streams with naiads and nymphs, or our groves and glens with fairies. Our English reviewers are welcome to retain all this worn out machinery loaned them by a childish antiquity. We are satisfied with the inspiration of truth and nature, and are content to build up a national literature and a national poetry on the basis of truth and reason. These are the enchantments, the wizard rods of the muse of American poetry. Told in the simplest, most unexaggerated strain, the story of our country's birth and fortunes is itself a poem. Why should we invent one? The necessity of fiction, of invention, is obvious enough with most nations, as the means of concealing a base history or a low and mean origin. The Latin poets, for instance, to hide the fact that Rome was originally a mere asylum for every criminal that might flee to it from other countries, connect its history with the goddess-born Æneas, as you read in the elaborate fiction of Virgil. The British poets, in like manner, when boasting of English virtue and English liberty, are forced perpetually to falsify history and fall back upon the dust and dim distance of antiquity, the fogs of the past, thick and heavy as those in which Providence has doomed those islands to welter; so that it seems to be their belief that there can be no poetry without fiction and falsehood; and they generously pity us because our history is so a thing of yesterday that we can't lie it down, and of course can't make poetry. Those poetic visions of liberty, for instance, that dance on the stream of English verse like sunshine on a leaping river, if the honest truth were distilled out of them, would amount to no more of substance than is found in one of their elves, of whom ten thousand it is said can dance at once on the point of a cambric needle. English poetry boasts magnanimously and grandiloquently of liberty bought

with the blood of forefathers; but English history tells us it was purchased in every instance almost with money. "A great proportion of her best laws, including the great Charter itself, as confirmed by Henry III., were, in the most literal sense, obtained by pecuniary bargain with the crown. In many parliaments of Edward III. and Richard II., this purchase of popular freedom is chaffered for, and retailed out, as distinctly and with as little apparent sense of disgrace, as the most legitimate traffic between two merchants would be transacted." Well may English reviewers court for English poets the aid of fiction. As we said, on this subject the American muse needs it not. She has but to sing the truth. Our fathers rose but yesterday from their baptism of blood. The bones of her martyrs are on every field. The bullets of her foes are in her shade-trees, not three-score years old. The stream of patriot blood still stains our halls. The pen that records it writes poetry!! And this is true of all American history. What imagination a century ago could have pictured all that history has realized within that time on the territory of this republic? We go back to a very recent period, and the whole country is a wilderness; here and there are tribes of wild men, but they are homeless and in a state of nature:

From the small worm that creeps abroad at  
midnight,

To sip cool dews and feed on sleeping flowers,  
To the huge form that leads its quiet life  
Among his old contemporary trees.

Life in all its grades is animal merely and uneventful. The mountains lift their heads in lonely majesty. The silence of the forest is unbroken, save by the falling nut, or the rustling leaf. The streams are unrippled, save by the splash of the water-fowl or the beaver. Flowers spring unseen and die ungathered. The sullen Atlantic flaps the eastern coast with his broad, dark wing, and once in half a century flings a dead body on the untrodden beach, the moan of floods and forests mingling for a requiem. There is nothing even to perish.

"Ruin itself stands still for want of Work,  
And Desolation keeps perpetual Sabbath."

But look again, and note the mighty change. An Empire, whose western shore receives the eternal serenade of the Pacific, and whose eastern is saluted by the roar of the Atlantic; its north barricaded by frosts, and its south receiv-

\* See Hallam's *Middle Ages*, Vol. ii, p. 191.



ing the spice gales of the tropic, displays its ensigns of prosperity and power everywhere. The wilderness is a garden. Innumerable towns and cities crowd her plains. Her streams, and lakes, and oceans, and ports, are crowded by commerce. Her flag is on every sea. The mountains smoke and empty out their treasure. The people have carved for themselves a name in everlasting characters, the first truly to solve the problem of political freedom; foremost in daring enterprise, with one hand subduing the wilderness of the new world, with the other shivering the shackles of the old. It needs not the grey and solemn twilight of antiquity to give the character of greatness and grandeur to such a history, with its scenes surpassing fable.

Our English reviewers ask "how can these recent people, who are of yesterday, in all their greenness and gristle, know anything about poetry?" Incomparable boobies! What have we been doing but making poetry ever since we came here? We have made such a poem as the world never read before, and we have written it on the floods and fields of our country and on the hearts of all men. What your poets could only dream, we have been and done. Read and be silent.

The truth is, all the great enterprises of this country have been conceived and carried on in the very spirit of genuine poetry, and that spirit still animates us with its own restless energy, and the real question is, whether we have not too much of it. It is the undue excitement of the imagination that makes us uneasy where we are and with what we have, and tempts us to untried and doubtful experiment and ceaseless change. It is this that lures the American from his native village, to become an emigrant, leads him to the valley of the Mississippi, and when there, points him to the Rocky Mountains, and tells him that the happy land lies beyond. Our circumstances are only too exciting, and the controlling and chastening, rather than the awakening of the American imagination, is the chief problem.

But we pass to notice some of our countrymen, whose names and productions are entitled to consideration, in this department of literature. We wish also to regard the moral character and influence upon the highest interests of humanity as well as the literary pretensions of their labors, as they pass before us,—an item, in the estimate, of small account in the judgment of the Foreign Quarterly, though otherwise reckoned here, and likely to be by posterity.

All finite excellence is comparative, and we

cannot but remember that the period of our first poetical efforts was one of wonderful intellectual splendor in the mother country. Such a glorious firmament of brilliant genius never hung over it. Such lights as Burns, Bloomfield, Byron, Coleridge, Shelley, Keats, Wordsworth, Southey, Moore, Crabbe, Wilson, Campbell, Rogers, Scott, Montgomery, Barry Cornwall, Tennyson, Talfourd, and a number more, adorned the period in which our present list of poetical writers appeared, and were read as extensively here as in England, and it is no small praise, that a respectable number among us sustain an honorable comparison with that sparkling constellation, in spite too of the unnatural and cherished prejudices of British literati, who in protecting our well-earned fame would best increase their own; and notwithstanding the inevitable hindrances to literary culture of the first years of the settlement of a great nation on a wide-spread territory. It is no vital matter, to be sure, what is thought of our literature in other countries, but it is pleasant to know, that the names of American poets, which we shall have occasion to mention presently, are honored on the continent, at the centres of literary taste and refinement, and that their well-read productions are found all over England, and by none are more highly prized than by British poets themselves. That there have been failures in the direction of poetical ambition we are well aware, though we are not aware that such failures are less frequent in the mother country.

The elevated moral tone of our American poetry, and its constant tendency to develop and support all the generous, gentle, and philanthropic sentiments; its high moral, religious, and social inculcations; its sweet revealings of the beauty of nature, and its stormy, fascinating pictures of homely virtues, joys, sorrows and endearments; its passionate love of country, compatible with the warmest and most comprehensive love of man, are its unfailing characteristics. In the poetry of no country are there so few lines, which, dying, the writers need wish to blot. It presents at once a singular exception and a beautiful example to other lands of song, in this its distinctive and national peculiarity. The high and holy task of poesy has been sadly misunderstood, even by minds most richly endowed with her intellectual gifts. The glorious Byron, upon whom every seraph did seem to set his seal, whose soul swelled, tortured with revelations from unknown worlds, which his unbaptized spirit comprehended not, and his untouched lip, quivering, left unuttered,

—Byron died dumb, as regarded the great end of poesy. So of Shelley, Keats, and others we forbear to name. They did not comprehend poetry as a teacher of truth through joy and through gladness, as a creatress of the faculties through a process of smoothness and delight; yielding in ethereal ministry, grace and sweetness to the rugged adversities and cankering cares of life, "through knowledge inhaled insensibly like fragrance, through dispositions stealing into the spirit like music from unknown quarters, through hopes plucked like beautiful wild-flowers, from the tombs that border the highways of the past to make a garland for a living forehead."\* The tone of poetry, its aim and influence on the heart, is everything. Says a recent critic, "in Childe Harold there is probably displayed more of the radiant vesture of the imagination than in any poem of the present age; yet the tone and spiritual purpose of that splendid apotheosis of misanthropy and egotism is unpoetical. Its effect is merely to stir and to sting. It leaves an impression upon the memory and the heart, disagreeable and harsh. We feel that the author's spiritual life was inharmonious, that the tone of his mind was not pure," and that his work is a failure, the spirit and aim of poetry justly considered.

We turn with glad hearts from such an example to our own bards, in communion with whom the best affections of our nature are warmed and purified, and the soul is wrought up to high and noble purposes, and made strong to do, and patient to suffer. When we enter into fellowship with Dana, Bryant, Longfellow, and kindred minds, especially after we have laid down our Byron, a change comes over us, and over the face of all that we behold that is wonderful. It is a flood of soft and holy light, a mild radiance, an inspiration and a power, noiseless but strong.

"The viewless spirit of a living sound,  
A living voice, a breathing harmony,  
A bodiless enjoyment."

And with it come better thoughts, and holy memories, and tears, and a wholesome sadness that softens, not irritates the heart. We look out upon nature, and it seems "specially rendered and made plain unto us, that a great worship is going on among the things of God." We look upon man and love him better, and wish to do something for him to make him happier and take the tear out of his eye. Home becomes a sanctuary, with sacrament and altar,

\* Coleridge altered.

revelations and worship, and all the relations and duties of life assume an aspect cheerful and sacred. This, we say, is the general tone and tendency of the great proportion of American poetry. It would be trespassing far too much at this time, to give very copious illustrations of its excellence, and yet we should do injustice to our subject should we wholly omit them.

Professor Longfellow is one of those whose writings take possession of our hearts in the way we have described. We should like any one with any poetic taste, just after reading a few pages of Byron, to take up a volume of Longfellow, and read thoughtfully his Footsteps of Angels.

"When the hours of day are number'd,  
And the voices of the night  
Wake the better soul that slumber'd  
To a holy, calm delight;

Ere the evening lamps are lighted,  
And like phantoms grim and tall  
Shadows from the fitful firelight  
Dance upon the parlor wall;

Then the forms of the departed  
Enter at the open door,  
The belov'd ones, the true-hearted  
Come to visit me once more;

He, the young and strong who cherish'd  
Noble longings for the strife,  
By the road-side fell and perish'd  
Weary with the march of life!

They, the holy ones and weakly,  
Who the cross of suffering bore,  
Folded their pale hands so meekly,  
Spoke with us on earth no more!

And with them the being beauteous,  
Who unto my youth was given,  
More than all things else to love me,  
And is now a saint in heaven.

With a slow and noiseless footstep,  
Comes that messenger divine,  
Takes the vacant chair beside me,  
Lays her gentle hand in mine.

And she sits and gazes at me,  
With those deep and tender eyes,  
Like the stars so still and saint-like,  
Looking downward from the skies.

Utter'd not, yet comprehended,  
Is the spirit's voiceless prayer,  
Soft rebukes in blessings ended,  
Breathing from her lips of air.

Oh, though oft depress'd and lonely,  
All my fears are laid aside,  
If I but remember only  
Such as these have lived and died."

What sweetness and power blend in these lines, to which the heart yields itself up freely, wholly! One must have time to recover himself from its inspiration, before he can do a wicked thing or form a wicked purpose.

Let us point out another passage from the same author, and ask you to observe its bracing influence upon your mind, in one of those oft recurring seasons of languor, indecision and feeble purpose, to which most men are subject.

"Life is real, life is earnest,  
And the grave is not its goal,  
Dust thou art, to dust returnest,  
Was not spoken of the soul.

Art is long and time is fleeting,  
And our hearts, though stout and brave,  
Still like muffled drums are beating,  
Funeral marches to the grave.

In the world's broad field of battle,  
In the bivouac of life,  
Be not like dumb, driven cattle,  
Be a hero in the strife.

Trust no future howe'er pleasant,  
Let the dead past bury its dead  
Act, act, in the glorious present,  
Heart within and God o'erhead.

Lives of great men all remind us  
We may make our lives sublime,  
And departing leave behind us,  
Footprints on the sands of time.

Footprints that perhaps another,  
Sailing o'er life's solemn main,  
A forlorn and shipwreck'd brother  
Seeing may take heart again."

Beautiful as are these extracts, they are selected to illustrate the quickening, sustaining spirituality of the poet, rather than the richness of his imagery, or the classic beauty of his style and diction.

Bryant is perhaps our best known poet, and well has he earned the high reputation he enjoys in England, as well as in his native land. Even the crabbed Foreign Review admits that "Nature made Bryant a poet. He treats his subjects with religious solemnity, and brings to the contemplation of nature in her grandest revelations, a pure and serious spirit. His poetry is reflective, but not sad; grave in its depths, but brightened in its flow by the sunshine of the imagination. His poems, addressed to rivers, woods, and winds, have the solemn grandeur of anthems. Their beauty is affecting, because it is true and full of reverence." Many of his most exquisite pieces, as well as those of Longfellow, Street, Lowell, and most of our best

poets, have been given to the world through that oldest, and ablest by far of all our monthly magazines, the New York Knickerbocker—a work deservedly honored in the highest literary circles of Europe, and sustained by as brilliant a corps of writers as ever graced the pages of a periodical, under admirable editorial management and taste.

Suffer us to quote a part of his Address to the Evening Wind, to remind you of the flowing richness of his verse, and exhibit the characteristics of his style—"chastely elegant both in thought and expression—ornament enough, but not in profusion or display—imagery that is natural, appropriate, and peculiarly soothing—select and melodious language—harmony in the flow of the stanza—gentleness in the spirit, and deep philosophy in the conception."

"Spirit that breathest through my lattice, thou  
That cool'st the twilight of the sultry day,  
Gratefully flows thy freshness round my brow;  
Thou hast been out upon the deep at play.  
Riding all day the wild blue waves till now,  
Roughening their crests and scattering high  
their spray,  
And swelling the white sail. I welcome thee  
To the scorched land, thou wanderer of the sea.

Nor I alone—a thousand bosoms round  
Inhale thee in the fulness of delight,  
And languid forms rise up, and pulses bound  
Livelier at coming of the wind at night;  
And languishing to hear thy grateful sound,  
Lies the vast inland stretch'd beyond the sight.  
Go forth into the gathering shade; go forth,  
God's blessing breath'd upon the fainting earth.

Go, rock the little wood-bird in his nest,  
Curl the still waters, bright with stars, and  
rouse  
The wide old wood from his majestic rest,  
Summoning from the innumerable boughs  
The strange, deep harmonies that haunt his  
breast;  
Pleasant shall be thy way where meekly bows  
The shutting flowers, and darkling waters pass,  
And 'twixt the o'ershadowing branches and the  
grass

The faint old man shall lean his silver head  
To feel thee; thou shalt kiss the child asleep,  
And dry the moistened curls that overspread  
His temples while his breathing grows more  
deep;  
And they who stand about the sick man's bed,  
Shall joy to listen to thy distant sweep,  
And softly part his curtains to allow  
Thy visit, grateful to his burning brow."

The poems of Whittier, full of burning thoughts, of Sprague, of Dana, probably the most original living poet in our language, of Percival, most of the odes of Pierpont, Halleck,



Drake, Willis, Street, and a number more whose names are familiar to the public ear, deserve and will receive the honoring regard of posterity, wherever the English language is read, and true and right-toned poetry is loved. These men have done something more than jingle words; they have spoken from the heart to the heart, and drawn from the deep fountains of truth and nature thoughts that can never perish, thoughts that have entered the moral currency and circulation, endorsed by the amen of millions of hearts that have felt their power.

"Theirs is that language of the heart,  
In which the answering heart would speak,  
Thought, word, that bids the warm tear start,  
Or the smile light the cheek.

And theirs that music to whose tone,  
The common pulse of man keeps time,  
In cot or castle's mirth or moan,  
In cold or sunny clime."

There was one whom we have not yet named, whose harp lies silent by his grave, but whose memory, fresh and fragrant, blooms in many a heart,—one to whom the lines of our Halleck apply most literally—

"None knew him but to love him,  
None named him but to praise;"

The topic of this essay summons him here, for who that knew him would think the honored list of American poets complete, which did not include the name of WILLIS GAYLORD CLARK?

Coleridge defines Genius as originality of intellectual construction; the moral accompaniment and actuating principle of which consists in the carrying on of the freshness and feelings of childhood into the powers of manhood. A more beautiful illustration Coleridge himself could not have desired, than the brief, brilliant career of CLARK: Willis we all called him, he seemed so like a child that had not yet lost his innocence and sweetness. He was the friend of our better days; our heart has seldom loved anything so well, and perhaps it is not meet that we should estimate his intellectual wealth. His mastery of language was perfect. Charles Lamb and Professor Longfellow are wonderful in this respect. But I think Clark excels them both in the absoluteness of sway over our inflexible speech, constraining it to reveal the nicest shades and discriminations of thought and feeling, and utter the softest breathings of man's spiritual nature, like the piping of a bird in the upper sky, whose note

lingers in our ear long after it has melted away in the heavens. The "searching pathos and mournful beauty" of his poetry, were remarked equally by the highest critical authorities, and the common breast. The lines written by him on the death of his wife, a lady of great personal beauty, rare accomplishments, and fond heart, who fell a victim to consumption in the brightness of youth, are full of touching beauty and the tenderest feeling.

"'Tis an autumnal eve—the low winds sighing  
To wet leaves, rustling as they hasten by;  
The eddying gusts to tossing boughs replying,  
And ebon darkness filling all the sky,—  
The moon, pale mistress, pall'd in solemn vapor,  
The rack, swift wandering through the void  
above,  
As I a mourner by my lonely taper,  
Send back to faded hours the plant of love.

Blossoms of peace once in my pathway springing,  
Where have your brightness and your splendor  
gone?  
And thou whose voice to me came sweet as  
singing,  
What region holds thee, in the vast unknown?  
What star far brighter than the rest contains thee,  
Beloved departed—empress of my heart?  
What bond of full beatitude enchains thee,  
In realms unveiled by pen's or prophet's art!

Ah! lov'd and lost! in these autumnal hours,  
When fairy colors deck the painted tree,  
When the vast woodlands seem a sea of flowers,  
O! then my soul exulting bounds to thee!  
Springs, as to clasp thee yet in this existence,  
Yet to behold thee at my lonely side;  
But the fond vision melts at once to distance,  
And my sad heart gives echo, she has died.

Yes, when the morning of her years was brightest,  
That angel presence into dust went down,  
While yet with rosy dreams her rest was lightest,  
Death for the olive wove the cypress crown,—  
Sleep, which no waking knows, o'ercame her  
bosom,  
O'ercame her large, bright, spiritual eyes;  
Spared in her bower connubial one fair blossom,  
Then bore her spirit to the upper skies.

There let me meet her, where, life's struggles over,  
The pure in love and thought their faith renew;  
Where man's forgiving and redeeming Lover,  
Spreads out his paradise to every view.  
Let the dim autumn with its leaves descending  
Howl on the winter's verge! yet spring will  
come;  
So my freed soul no more 'gainst fate contending,  
With all it loveth shall regain its home."

They were strains precursive of his early fate,  
soon to be succeeded by the muffled march of mourners. The spring came. From the windows of his sick chamber we looked together at the young buds, that were never to bloom on his eye. His prayer was heard and they met.



.... No nobler heart than his slumbers in the halls of death, and to us the world looks sadder since his gentle and generous nature forsook it.

We close these remarks, and for the present take leave of a pleasant theme upon which more might profitably be said. We look on the field of American poetry, with respect for the moral character, and faith in the intellectual force and literary standing of the country. We thank God that here no mind has immortalized itself by its obliquity, perverseness and misanthropy, and by pandering to the base passions of the heart. We are thankful that we have some immortal names in the peaceful walks of literature, and that our sons of song have understood the high uses of the lyre, and made poesy minister to the happiness and refinement of the nation. As at the presence of Orpheus in Pluto's realm, the wheel of Ixion stopped, the stone of Sisyphus stood still, Tantalus for-

got his thirst, and even the furies relented, so has the poetry of which we have been speaking, assuaged the sorrows, relaxed the rigors, and tempered the storms of the world in which man is a pilgrim and a stranger, and too often a mourner; and our heart and head have been made wiser, better and happier, by its sage inculcations and its soothing music. A healthy spiritualism interfuses itself with the common mind, and elevates it to a sunnier level and a serener sky; and the mild lights of a kinder, holier humanity break and beam from a thousand towers and headlands over the laboring waves of life. Poetry, no longer the glorifier of barbaric violence, of horrid war, of vaulting chivalry, becomes a ministering angel, hovering over us from the friendly heavens, commissioned to tranquillize the heart, wipe the tear from the eye, and kindle a living virtue and a beaming joy in the soul of man.

## FUCHSIA GRACILIS.

(SEE ENGRAVING.)

THE FUCHSIA, one species of which embellishes this number of the Magazine, is a genus of most beautiful exotics. It belongs to the eighth class and first order, according to the artificial system of Linnaeus; and according to the natural system of Jussieu, it is ranked under the order *omogrea*. The common name of the plant is LADIES EAR DROP. The genus was so named in honor of Leonard Fuchs, a celebrated German botanist, and if we recollect aright, the author of an extensive work on some subject connected with natural history.

The Fuchsia, except one species indigenous on the island of New Zealand, is a native of South America. It is said to grow in the valleys among the Andes in great abundance, and more luxuriantly than when cultivated in our more northern latitude. A botanist of some note, who made the tour of South America in search of interesting plants for the Royal Botanic Gardens in England, describes one species as attaining sometimes the height of eight feet. She is quite enthusiastic in her account of this family as they appear in their native clime.

Their drooping branches, covered with clusters of crimson flowers, which form a happy contrast with their dark green leaves, blooming in humble seclusion, she represents as in the highest degree attractive and beautiful. The Indian girls of the country are accustomed to adorn their hair with wreaths of these flowers at their bridal festivities, and few plants are there more admired for their beauty.

There are several species of the Fuchsia—it is scarcely possible to determine how many. Some botanists enumerate ten; the Metropolitan Encyclopædia says twelve; but of these, doubtless, some are mere accidental varieties, rather than distinct species. Loudon, in his admirable Encyclopædia of Plants, describes only four species; and the inference is, that he found scarcely sufficient authority for extending the genus farther. The calyx of all the species is funnel-form, of a brilliant red color, almost concealing the petals. The engraving represents the *F. gracilis*, one of the most deservedly admired of this beautiful family.

## THE MONK.

BY M. M. BACKUS.

THE monk is an omnipresent character in modern history. The Romish church will have it that he is an essential element of our religion, and that he dates his birth coeval with the Son of God. However this may be, it is certain the seeds from which he sprang were already flying in the theological atmosphere before the first century was closed, and that these seeds subsequently took root and blossomed under every sky, vegetating like toadstools upon the fallen and decaying branches of Christianity.

The source of this monastic mania is asceticism. Austerities of the body were recommended by the Oriental and Grecian sages to their pupils, as a means of moral and intellectual purification, which in its turn would fit the soul for initiation into the sacred mysteries of high philosophy. The Gnostic school, which at the birth of Christ enjoyed the highest popularity with the western Asiatics, was uncommonly full and rigid in this article of discipline. Its religious dogmas were a singular compound of half-formed truths, and gloomy sentimentalism. Under a sky and a sun which forced the physical powers forward to an early maturity, while they left the mind with only a stunted growth, this dyspeptic state of religion spread like wildfire. When Christianity met so universal an antagonism, she might at first overwhelm it in the open conflict, but in the slow process of establishing her organization among her new subjects, she could hardly escape, for she was not on her guard against, those modifications, which a vanquished and subtle enemy might introduce. Egypt was the hothouse in which this religious weed first shot forth; but like all hothouse plants, it dragged out a weakly, sickly existence, until it had been transplanted into the vigorous soil of Northern Europe, and acquired strength and flexibility by exposure to wind and storm.

The first institutor of the monastic life, Antony the Great, was born in Upper Egypt, about the middle of the second century. An illiterate young man, of great wealth, enervated by idleness, and almost imbecile in mind, he was educated in the Christian religion. Inoculated with the poison of the Gnostic school, he resolved, after the death of his parents, upon the observance of a rigid asceticism, and thus with a hearty

contempt of all learning, and a sentimental mania for solitary meditation, animal emotion, and for the indulgence of a lively though diseased fancy, he bade adieu to the stir and confusion of society, and buried himself in the desert. His secret sin and his great transgression were one and the same—the product of an impure imagination. Against this vice he bent all his energies; and in this his conduct was commendable. But when he failed to root out the seeds of the disease, and turned the bitterness of his own disappointment upon the heads of those, who contrived to live full as happily and morally as himself in the social sphere in which God had placed them, he exposed himself to the charge of being an addled fanatic.

Antony denied himself every pleasure of sense, reduced his allowance of bread and salt to the last possible pennyweight, blushed to be seen eating in public, slept only when driven by the demands of exhausted nature, used the scantiest clothing of goats' and camels' hair, wrought mats of palm leaves for a livelihood, put in practice every expedient for torturing and emaciating his body, and spent most of his hours in meditation and prayer. These habits of life required solitude; but while he was fleeing from man, a host of admiring followers hung upon his retreat, and swarmed about his footsteps. His physical powers must soon have yielded under these austerities, but for the employment thrust upon him by the attendant crowd. Despairing of escape, he made the best of his irksome company, by teaching them a philosophy which is now pronounced deism, and imposing upon them a set of unwritten rules for their governance. These rules were a transcript of those observed by himself, and in overseeing their faithful administration, and correcting delinquents, Antony found his hands full. At length, erecting an edifice upon the sloping side of an Egyptian mountain, he formed his company into a band of *cenobites*. Thus was the monastic system fully developed in his own person and career. His first stage was that of a voluptuary suffering under a plethora of wealth, in ridding himself of which he contracted another, and became an ascetic, or a sort of Christian dervise. The second stage was that of a monk, or a variety of the Chris-

tian fakir—*poudjoo*, living alone,—the more readily and effectually to grow in the graces of his system. The third stage was that of a cenobite, or a species of ecclesiastical Fourierite. The common terms, hermit, anchorite, monk, recluse, and the like, may be used indifferently of Antony as of all monks after his day; but the term ascetic, with its synonyms, is alone strictly applicable to the enthusiastic observers of austere penances, who preceded this Egyptian monk. Revery, animal excitement, the idle phantasies which spring from an abused dietary system, an emaciated body, dreams, ghosts, coarse and uncleanly raiment, ignorance, dogmatism—these were his virtues which rated the highest with Antony; unfortunately he recommended them to a generation whose theological capacity seems to have been of just magnitude enough to apprehend and admire 'old wives' fables,' by a life of harmless piety and patient perseverance: and when, at the extraordinary age of one hundred and five years, he finished his earthly course in peace, his followers extolled his virtues as divine, and clinched the argument in favor of monasticism by recording a host of miracles which they said he had performed, rivalling in number and degree even those of the Saviour himself. The Romish church directs that prayer for his intercession be made to preserve men from a terrible disease of the middle ages, which dried up and blackened every limb it attacked, and is hence called St. Antony's fire. While relics were in fashion, a fragment of Antony's bones was regarded as an amulet, which made its owner safe and invulnerable in all contests of pugilism.

From Egypt the monastic fever spread into Syria and Palestine. Hilarion, having acquired the requisite knowledge in the school of Antony, turned back into his native land of Palestine, sold or gave away his estate, collected about him a band of sympathetic spirits, and took up his residence in the howling desert which lies between Gaza and Egypt. At first, his abode was a miserable hut, which was soon exchanged for a narrow cell, so low that a man could not stand erect in it. In this living sepulchre he affirms he endured many contests with the legions of bad spirits, and uniformly worsted them in the fight. To his body, which he termed his jackass, he denied barley, and fed it with chaff, in order to tame it with hunger and privation. For several days he would suffer neither food nor drink to pass his lips, and would meanwhile husband his hours by digging ditches, making rush baskets, singing, and

prayer. Two-and-twenty years he pursued this course of life, and eventually gathered about himself over two thousand followers. Bishops and renowned instructors, high and low, males and females, flocked to see the uncaged monomaniac, and treasure up his silly drivings as so many revelations from heaven. His fame was greatly enhanced by the victory which he claimed to have gained over the Devil in a personal rencontre. His miracles, however, multiplied the most rapidly after his decease, and the learned, though deluded Jerome, who undertook the task of his biographer, throws down his pen in despair at their vastness and number, and stands in stupefaction before the mass, which a lifetime were too brief to record.

By the middle of the fourth century monasticism was firmly established in the affections of a majority of the churches. Priests and people, all ranks and conditions in life, vied with each other in extolling its excellence, which combined, as it was thought and preached, the concentrated virtues of the Christian religion. Hitherto, however, the monks had been composed of that illiterate and inefficient class, in which numbers can form no substitute for a controlling head. There were energy, and willingness, and materials enough, of every character, in the monasteries: but they lacked organization, oneness of purpose, and external uniformity. This shape and efficiency they were destined to receive from an original and masterly mind, which nature had endowed with singular activity and force, and placed under the happy restraints of sincere piety and sound learning. Such a man was Basil the Great. At an early age he had mastered all the learning of Greece, visited Athens and Constantinople, and made the acquaintance of the first philosophers of the day. Sincerity, and an earnest desire for truth, were the prominent traits and leading motives of his character; and he turned from the infidelity of philosophy as from a soulless, powerless system of dogmas, to investigate the claims of the Christian religion. The name of Origen was at that time famous throughout the world for the learning, sagacity, and beauty of his commentaries. At the feet of this expositor of the faith Basil sat, and drew from his mystic theology that which poisoned the whole current of his after-life—a love of mysticism and asceticism. Travelling into Egypt, he was instantly struck with the advantages of the institution of Antony, and resolved to devote his days to the same retirement and discipline. Returning to Pontus, he discovered, after a diligent search, a



spot, the scenery of which promised to contribute to the end of religious meditation, and immediately disclosed his intention of turning monk to his intimate friend, Gregory Nazianzen.

"The place I have selected," he writes, in his nineteenth epistle, "is a delightful romantic site. It is a high mountain in Pontus, on the banks of the river Iris, surrounded by a dense forest, itself watered by cool and limpid streams, flowing in a northerly direction. At the foot of the mountain lies a level plain, through which meander a score of rivulets, overhung by trees and shrubs, which fructify here spontaneously. It might be called an island, shut out from the rest of the world. On two sides it is rendered inaccessible by the intervention of two deep and broad clefts in the rock; a third is walled in by the impetuous torrent of the river; and approach is practicable only by a narrow path upon the fourth. Of this path we are masters. From my dwelling I enjoy an enchanting prospect over the plain and sinuous stream. Indeed, it will not yield, in point of romantic beauty, to the loveliness of the Strymon, which flows so sweetly by Amphipolis. The latter is the gentler stream, mine more headlong and torrent-like: but even its whirls, and eddies, and breakers, are peopled with an innumerable nation of fishes. Sweet perfumes exhale from the bosom of earth, and soft breezes float in the air. What more can heart desire? Flowers and birds, plaintive notes and sweet incense, all are mine; but above all, the spontaneous growth of every species of fruit necessary to subsistence, leaves me to my own meditation, unoccupied with the cares of this world; and my repose is never disturbed, save by the deep-mouthed hounds of some straggling huntsmen. My companions are the stag, the hind, the goat, and the hare. Were I not a fool to exchange this spot, even for the far-famed Tiberine seat? Like Alcmaon, when he had reached the lovely Echinades Islands, I here finish my pilgrimage."

It is not surprising, that a spot, in which nature united so many of her charms and her sublimest shapes, should awaken the enthusiasm of so susceptible a mind as Basil's. It requires no great asceticism to fall in love with beauty and grandeur, fragrance and music, waterfalls and sunsets; and most of us, totally surd as our ears are to the enticements of a cloister life, would gladly consult our own pleasures and spend a few months in the midst of such inspiring and ennobling scenes. Gregory was of this opinion himself, and therefore rallied his sentimental friend on the charms,

which an overacted disgust for city life had lent to his monastic site.

Basil parries the charge by confessing, that the character of his retreat is of no great value in exciting pious emotions; but he has sickened of the noise and bustle of cities, and loathes the hollow virtues of their inhabitants. "We bear constantly about with us the seeds of internal disease, and are ever exposed to its disturbing action. From this foe solitude furnishes no relief; and yet tranquillity of mind can never be enjoyed except in some deserted spot. He who prides himself on having escaped the toils of wedlock, is no less sleeplessly beset by a legion of raging lusts, and uncontrollable passions; or if he be married, he is immediately hampered with the cares of a family, solicitous for the education of his children, the adornment of his wife, and the government of his servants. A secession from the whole world offers the only refuge. A secession from the world, however, does not imply to be out of one's self bodily, but to tear away the soul from its union and sympathy with the corporeal affections—to become citiless, homeless, penniless, friendless, without estates, without food, without business, amassing nothing, ignorant of events and science, and ready to receive only, and those always, the responses of the divine oracles. Such occupations are incompatible with solitude alone. In addition to a rigid observance of hours of prayer, the monk should aim at mildness and affability of address, think before opening his lips, be modest in advancing his opinions, and discard all virulent epithets and raillery. He should scrupulously renounce playful conversation, and adjust his body to the temper of his mind; having a lowly look, a disordered dress, tangled and squalid locks, and filthy raiment. The tunic should be girt with a ceinture; the girdle should not rest upon the hips, for that is feminine; neither should it hang loose, for that is wanton. A slow gait should express the unruffled tranquillity of the mind: the garment should always be of one kind, and chosen in direct violation of all rules of taste as to color and texture; and upon the feet should be found the cheapest sandals the Empire could supply. At the table the frugal meal should be partaken with modesty; and in fine, but one of the twenty-four hours should be spent in the cares of the body."

Such were the crude notions of Basil, when he would apologize to an intimate friend for his love of solitude. In a letter to Chilon who had become a convert to the system, he advises the



young man to prosecute his task with ardor, and banish from his heart every remembrance of former friends. "Love not the crowd, the country or the city, but feast upon the joys of solitude; psalm-singing, revery and prayer are now your only duties. Cast not a glance back upon the world, the learning and theology of its bishops or the extensive assemblies of the saints; frown upon every incipient thought, that you are fattening here like a sluggish wild beast, as only a base suggestion of the Devil himself. There are, to be sure, good things in the world, but they are all mixed up with evil. There are fine speeches and fine fables; plunderers, tyrants, and thieves; great virtues and great vices; drunkards and moral bloodhounds; fair women, but frail; and virginity, that only defiles the thought; yea, I have heard there many a sermon, that was wonderful nice to live by, but I never found a single teacher, whose virtues were worthy of his sermons. Then there are dramatic revels, the gay dance, the sweet lyre, the happy buffoonery, the empty folly and the rough jostling of passion—tears from the haunts of poverty, shouts from the palace of the tyrant, wailing and secret anguish from all. What boots the possession of all this? The convent, my friend Chilon, banishes it all from the thought of the fancy."

We have no sympathy with the mind, which can stifle its admiration of the sincerity which these letters breathe, and the ardor with which a bruised spirit seeks relief from its anguish; but we have just as little sympathy with that other mind, which stupidly transfers its admiration of their sincerity to their fallacy, and pays them the honors due to Revelation alone: which can with a bedridden zeal worship a corrupt system simply because it is as grey in years as in iniquity, and revere a frenzied ultraism of the fourth century as the most perfect and pure Christianity of the nineteenth. It is curious to trace the dividing line between the pure and the impure in Basil's strange medley of compassion and advice; nay, it is even instructive by the lesson it teaches of the insidious character of superstition, and the subtle means by which it acquires a supremacy over the reason and the heart. There can be no danger at this day in taking this circumstantial view of the monastic system, when that system has been subjected not only to the Aristotelian test of logic, but also to the Baconian test of experiment; and verily its condemnation has been to be "buried with the burial of an ass, drawn and cast forth beyond the gates of Jerusalem."

When this sentimentalism had thoroughly tintured the reason of Basil, it began to assume form and substance under the active and creative energies of his genius. With wonderful skill and foresight he drew up a body of rules for the administration of a cloister, and the conduct of its tenants. He altered and improved these rules as experience and a ripper judgment enabled him, and he left them at his death so perfect and so comprehensive, that they have constituted the basis, upon which all subsequent monastic orders have been erected. This honor of invention is universally awarded to him by the Oriental church; but the pride and envy of the Western led her to shift the laurel from Basil to Benedict, because the latter in the sixth century drew up a constitution for monks, and upon Monte Cassino faithfully bore his yoke of will-worship with a patience, which has been the envy and emulation of all good Romanists ever since.

While man was thus cowardly turning his back on active life, woman looked on, not unconcerned. The epidemic of example overshadowed even those fine and well balanced emotions of the female heart, which so far outstrip the slow pace of masculine reason, and so frequently purify it from the dregs of subtlety and error. But if man was decided on proving recreant to his office, and on offering up, under the old Pharisaical cry of *corban*—it is a gift—eternal celibacy on the altar of superstition, woman was resolved on vowing upon the same altar her virginity: if he was bent on being a monk, she was bent upon being a nun—and it was so. She hasted to the wild and rugged scenes of nature, built herself a substantial mansion, disfigured the natural beauties of her person, wandered about in sackcloth, and brooded in secret despair over the "temptation without and the corruption within," from which she could find no refuge. But now, just when the loud shout of triumph was about to be raised over a vanquished enemy, it appeared that the enemy was even within the citadel itself;—that the last intrenchment against indulgence had been yielded at the moment she imagined the victory won. In her flight from the face of men, she left behind her the fear of detection, and the powerful motives of a good name on earth. The enormous charities of the superstitious had provided her with a home and the means of subsistence for life: and she was left beyond the pale of social sympathy, which is the very heart's blood of woman's happiness, careless of the misfortunes of time, thoughtless

of the morrow, and stripped of her brightest ornaments and the chief office of her sex. It requires no gift of prophecy to foretell the issue of so unnatural a state of things: but it requires a mind, encased in the impenetrable armor of angels, to approach and survey, without exposure to the plague, the steaming lazar-houses of the celibats and virgins, and we hasten from the infected Sodom without daring to revert our eyes.

Chemistry has made known the fact that water, when resolved into its constituent parts, is a composition of two gases, oxygen and hydrogen; and that, when these elements are allowed to issue from their respective reservoirs and re-unite, under certain chemical conditions, they generate a heat which fuses and devours any and every known form of matter on the surface of the earth. We can find no apter simile than this to describe the unnatural decomposition of society into monks and nuns, and its foul reorganization by the issue of the confluent streams of passion from the cloister and the nunnery. On one side stands a fraternity proclaiming in every act, in every gesture, nay, in its very existence, its inability to curb rampant passion, and its distrust of the good grace of God to enable it to lead a chaste life in the social state. On the other a sisterhood responds to the confession by echoing the conscious frailty of its principles and virtue. The very atmosphere about their solitudes vibrates with the whispers of burning passion, the ear tingles with the siren voice of the tempter, and lust is hourly gathering strength to burst from the cerements of a quack embalming, and live again in the form, fashion, and freedom of its native state. The cowl and the veil hide alike the pale brow of effrontery and the crimson cheek of shame, the confessional opens up the tablet of the soul, and heart answereth to heart as the face of man to its reflection from the mirror. Hypocrisy favors the stealthy approach; the absence of earthly hopes has left no room for earthly terrors; and the common interest of accomplices in crime seals the lips against disclosure, and urges them on from thought to sin, from sin to malignancy, until they would, like the fallen angels, wrap the world in the ruin and death which await themselves. Monasticism and celibacy act like the cataplasms of an empiric, adding violence to the internal and festering disease of original sin, and causing it to rankle still more fiercely with the pent-up poison—or they are the ponderous and towering masses, piled up and over the crater of bubbling, heaving, molten, volcanic

fire, which, when it lists, uses them as an avenue along which it acquires direction, and as material out of which it forms lava and ashes, to whelm the world with surer and swifter destruction.

To lead the life of a solitary anchorite was doubtless the whole object of the inventor of monasticism; but it was soon found that "the whole duty of man" did not consist in assimilating his life to that of a bat, and that the mind and passions of man were not to be interred along with his body, within the four walls of a cloister. The ascetic, from abhorring himself, began to abhor his fellows; he turned misanthrope for necessity, and when he flung himself back into society—for man is a gregarious animal, monasticism to the contrary notwithstanding—he grasped at such offices as would give the freest scope to his passions, and supply the absence of the indulgence. In this dispersion from the monastery, each naturally resought his native element; the bird the air, the fish his waves, the beast his den, the bat his cell, and the snake and the paddock their stagnant pool. For thus we meet the monk upon the records of modern story: here a devoted herald of the cross, there a crafty statesman; now a harlequin and now an assassin; serving as the ghost for the catastrophe of fiction, sporting the minnesinger under the nunnery window, acting the hangman in an Inquisition, and playing the mountebank at the fair: a missionary under the burning sun of India, a bravo in Venice, a casuist in Paris, a pimp in Rome, and a plotting, intriguing, uncertain, and mysterious being, the world over.

But man, even in the form of a monk, is clannish. The seminaries from which issued the perennial supply of this unnatural order of beings, caught a spirit of rivalry, and fanned it with all the zeal of which such spirits are capacious. Thence sprang a countless brood of conflicting monastic orders, which each century multiplied and subdivided until it seemed as if the whole huge mass would undergo disintegration and crumble in pieces by its own weight. But the pressure from without supplied the want of internal cement. A common interest and a common source of livelihood assuaged the violence of party malevolence. They all labored in common to indoctrinate the mass of mankind with the feculent dogmas of a false religion, and then fattened like a covey of carrion-birds upon the putrescence of the common prey. It was a night of despair, beyond the ken of man to invent a remedy, and beyond the

strength of his arm to apply it, if invented. Then God turned and remembered his own faithfulness. Into the gloomy mind of a Spanish enthusiast he breathed the "savor of death," and caused Ignatius Loyola to conceive and bring forth a scheme, which, combining in one all the motives that stir the spiritual depths of human action, and so adapting its economy as to bring into play every element and every variety of character, turned the lesser rivulets of individual motive and faculty into one deep and broad channel, and amassed the waters to deluge the nations. Then malice, ambition, learning, lust, religious revery, and treachery, received each its fullest development, and knelt in harmony around the specious shrine of religion. As Jesuitism moved onward, accelerating its march and widening its path, absorbing the turbulent and the ambitious, the criminal and the devotee, the miser and the spendthrift, within its ranks, acquiring skill in the use of its tactics, and courage from success, dallying with the haughty and trampling on the weak, it kept its eye singly upon the prize of its calling, and burrowed its way up through sin-laden consciences to the sceptre and the sword. Then, having reached this fearful elevation, and secured its fortress, in the frenzy of its power it turned the artillery of revenge back upon everything that had opposed its progress, and scathed everything lovely and holy in society, civil

and ecclesiastical, with the fires of its infuriated zeal. The rival orders of monks fled from its presence as from the spirit of all evil; but when they found opposition useless and escape impossible, they bowed their submissive heads, and consented to become its minions. Thenceforth, like the hell-hounds of Sin, in that gigantic conception of Milton, they

would creep,  
If aught disturbed their noise, into her womb,  
And kennel there,

while Jesuitism, in lonely and hideous grandeur,  
stood like the grisly Terror herself,

Voluminous and vast, a serpent armed  
With mortal sting,

growing every hour and rising from every exploit, 'tenfold more hideous and deform.'

We have not entered into a critical analysis of the moral fallacy of monasticism. Such an analysis would lead us to a proposition, evangelical in itself, and yet a paradox in its enunciation. In the world, and yet out of the world, is for him who obeys the simple precepts of Christ, easy of solution in practice; while all those who cast up for themselves some better way, only expose their folly, contaminate their faith, disgrace their profession, and jeopard the salvation of their souls.

## CHILDHOOD.

WHEN I was a guileless child,  
Pure and gentle, kind and mild,

In the morning of my day,

By those miseries undefiled

Which have driven my peace away;

Basking in my merry play

'Neath the sunshine, like a fay

Danced I ever joyously;

Naught to frighten did I see.

Flowers crowned my childish head,

When I gaily wanderéd,

Every hope before me spread,

Every joy was new to me.

Happy moments, where are ye?

Can it be that you are fled?

I have asked the flowers I played with;—

They are withered now, and dead.

I have asked the birds I stayed with,

Whom I gentle music made with;

But their spirits now are sped,

Since the tear-drop first I shed

Joy has left my saddened breast.

Since the heart's weak vein first bled,

I have lost the spirit's zest

Which once used to make me blest,

When, in youthful gaiety,

And from care and sorrow free,

Every path to pleasure led.

Happy moments, where are ye?

Can it be that you are fled?

C. W. B.



## TRIALS MAKE THE MAN.

BY REV. T. S. CLARKE.

THE human mind is an instrument of mighty power; and yet, previous to its being fitted for use by trial, it is like gold in the ore bed; it is mixed up with the rubbish of passion and sensuality, and covered over with earthly feelings; and not, any more than gold, till it is dug up, and refined, and stamped as the current coin of the kingdom of truth, is it fit to be used to promote the beneficent enterprises of society, and the glory of God.

The common idea of trials, however, is often wide of the mark, they being regarded as something to be *endured*; and *patience* and *submission* are the only expected products. The mind is fixed on one suffering the pains of sickness, or of some earthly bereavement; and the thing looked for is, that he behave himself quietly as a weaned child. This view, indeed, is right as far as it goes. It is right to ask and to expect that the sick man turn his face to the wall, and pray with a sweet submission to the will of heaven. But still this view does not appear to embrace the *main article*. The great design of refining gold is to fit it for use, and, when stamped, to make it the current coin of the world; so that the East Indian, when he sees it, shall look upon it with as much favor as he of the country where it was first refined and stamped—so that it shall pass readily everywhere in Europe, Africa, Asia, America, and in the Islands of the Sea, and go forth in exchange for the commerce of the world. So the various trials sent upon us by the Providence of God are intended to purify us, that we may be *used* in the kingdom of truth and holiness. The soul of man has wonderful capacities for useful action, and well it may have, for it is the breath of the Almighty, as indestructible as himself. But what multitudes are utterly unconscious of what they are—of the good they might do, if the dross were melted out of them in the furnace of trial, and their minds were waked up by the power of the world to come! How many deem themselves mere cyphers, as to the power of being useful, not because they are humble, but because they are ignorant of their resources, and of what they *can* do in the way of favorably affecting other minds, and of the wonderful extent to which their faculties might be improved by suitable exercise.

Now there need to be, and there are, various processes by which such men are brought to the knowledge of themselves—of what they can and ought to do—and in what ways they may best serve their generation, according to their several ability. Trials are made of them in various ways, fitted and intended to draw them out of the little nutshell of selfishness, and to induce them “to run with patience the race that is set before them.”

The *nature* of these trials, together with their *end* and *aim*, it may not be amiss briefly to state.

It should be remarked, however, in passing, that what gives a man power to do good is self-command, joined to a character for honesty, and the spirit of self-sacrifice for the public welfare. Everywhere, the man who controls his passions, on whose tongue is the law of kindness, whose judgment is so disciplined as to enable him to fit means to their appropriate ends, and whose selfishness readily yields to the calls of public duty, is a leading spirit—a man of strength in the community.

Now, the trials to which we are subjected by the Providence of God, are fitted and intended to bring out and mature just these traits of character.

First and foremost is a class of trials designed to bring us to the consciousness of power to do battle successfully with difficulties in the way of self-improvement and the general good.

How little was David aware, when he first became the shepherd of his father's sheep, of what he could do for the honor of his country and his God. To bring him to the consciousness of this power, his strength was first tested by a battle with the lion and the bear that came to destroy the flock of which he had the care. This educated him to meet without fear in single combat, the Philistine that defied the armies of the living God. For when the stripling came into the camp, at the command of his father, to see how his brethren fared, seeing all the strong men afraid to accept the challenge of the uncircumcised giant, and remembering what he had been able to do with the lion and the bear, God assisting him, he offered to meet this proud boaster as the champion of Israel. “And Saul said, Thou art not able to go against this Philistine; for thou art but a youth, and he a man of war

from his youth. And David said unto Saul, Thy servant kept his father's sheep, and there came a lion and a bear, and took a lamb out of the flock. And I went out after him, and smote him, and delivered it out of his mouth; and when he arose up against me I caught him by his beard, and smote him, and slew him. Thy servant slew both the lion and the bear: and this uncircumcised Philistine shall be as one of them, seeing he hath defied the armies of the living God. David said moreover, the Lord, who delivered me out of the paw of the lion, and out of the paw of the bear, he will deliver me out of the hand of this Philistine. And Saul said unto David, Go, and the Lord be with thee." Here the reader will perceive that the bear and the Philistine stood in David's mind in the relation of cause and effect. In other words, that his successful encounter with the bear prepared him also to go single-handed against the great enemy of his country. The trials to which he was subjected, as the keeper of his father's flocks, gave him the first impulse, that made him the eminent man that he subsequently became.

Another striking illustration of the upward impulse imparted to a man's spirit, when trials lead him to the consciousness of what he is, and what he may be, is found in the life of Lord Nelson. Alone and unfriended in his early days, it seemed to him, at one time, that he could never rise in his profession. But though the sense of his discouragement pressed heavily on his soul, yet it had the effect to draw him out—to inspire the fixed resolution to do and to dare all that was necessary to reach the high mark at which he aimed; and to the resolution, which this trial of his spirit inspired, he owed the success of his after life.

Next to these trials designed to bring us to the consciousness of what we are, and of what with energy and perseverance we may be, come tests of the judgment to devise efficient plans of action.

Not a day passes, in which a man is not tried in this respect in *some* relation. The test may indeed be, and usually is, on a *small scale*, and is intended to show whether he is *wise* in *little things*; whether in his daily conversation and deportment, and in the management of minor concerns, there is such practical wisdom in adapting means to ends as will justify the confiding to him of a larger trust. His condition of being elevated to the high places of responsibility and influence, as it is a *settled law* of Providence, is seldom sufficiently thought of

We cannot long confide in men, who lack the attribute of a sound, comprehensive judgment. They cannot be trusted as leaders in good enterprises, because they are not *sure-footed*.

Now if the reader will observe the direction of providential trials, he will perceive many of them bearing on this very point—testing a man's judgment—and showing to the world whether or not he is a *thoughtful* man; whether or not he sits down and carefully counts the cost before he begins to build; whether he works according to a well devised plan of action, or whether he is merely the creature of impulse and whim.

Next there are trials of his power of *self-control*: whether he will keep his body under, and his appetites in subjection to right reason—whether he keeps a strong hand on the various passions of anger, envy, and prejudice, so that his mind can work freely, and in the manner intended by his Creator. The man of passion and appetite cannot be used in the service of truth and benevolence; he does not come forth from trials as gold from the crucible; and hence cannot be used as the circulating medium in the kingdom of holiness.

Now that men are constantly tried in this respect must be apparent to every reflecting mind; and not, till they *bear* such trials can they be *used*. There is as yet in them more of dross than of gold; they must therefore be subjected to the purifying fire of God's Providence and Spirit, or remain useless in the ore-bed of sensuality. Self-command is an essential element in the well-doer. How soon would all the power of even Paul to do good have been turned into utter weakness, if the cavilling remark, or the biting sarcasms of his adversaries, had thrown him off his balance, and led him to return railing for railing!

And then last, though not least, comes the trial of his *preferences*:—whether these are for his own exclusive interests, or for the general good. These preferences are tested by every call made upon him to aid in the printing and general circulation of the Bible—in sustaining the missionary enterprise—in establishing evangelical institutions at home and abroad—and in supplying the wants of the poor and needy. Now if he abide these trials; if his heart has been so changed, as to be filled with the sympathies and kindness of heaven, he comes forth as gold, and can be used in the service of truth and righteousness. "The Lord loveth the cheerful giver," and can use him as the Almoner of his bounties to the destitute and afflicted. But if he

cannot forsake all for Christ, and goes away sad from every call for self-sacrifice, because he has large possessions, and loves them more than the well-being of his race; if his eye is evil, and his heart sour, when charity makes a demand upon his purse, and his efforts, he shows himself to be a cumberer of the ground—a branch that bears no fruit; a cloud without water, carried about by the winds of selfishness.

We thus see that the great question which the trials of Providence are daily leading us to settle is, whether we will take the position in the kingdom of God, in which alone we can work in harmony with his plans. To think of ourselves more highly than we ought to think is to counterfeit and vitiate the coin of the divine kingdom. A proud and selfish man is like a gnarled and crooked piece of timber, which cannot be used for purposes of building, and which is fit only to be burned. And the great design of providential discipline is to humble his pride, to induce a just self-valuation—and to lead him to act in harmony with that law, which requires him to love his neighbor as himself, and to estimate every intelligent being according to his real worth. And when the trial results in casting down his haughty imaginations, and filling him with the meekness and gentleness of Christ, he comes forth as gold, purified, stamped with the divine image, and fit to be used in the moral commerce of the world.

These remarks are sufficient to bring out the noble aim of trials to the full view of the reader, leading him to see that the great stream of humanity is filled with *flood-wood*, drifting down towards the gulf of perdition, and that the Providence and grace of God are using various means to draw it to the shore, and to save it from being utterly lost to all useful purposes. All along the banks, he will see many contrivances to reach and arrest the drifting souls of men, and to plant them on the rock of ages, and to fill them with songs of praise in view of their surprising deliverance. Some are just entering the stream;—others are far on their way to the gulf;—others still are so much under the control of the raging waters, as to be apparently beyond the possibility of being saved. Still all along, God's voice is heard calling after them; his arms of mercy are extended to reach them; his Spirit often breathes over the troubled deep, and during the calm thus produced, many are arrested and drawn to the shore. The design of all such efforts is to save and fit for use what would otherwise be worthless and lost.

If the writer has been successful in this

representation of the Nature and Design of trials, he has placed the reader on vantage ground, from which he cannot fail to discern several facts in human affairs, which it much concerns him to understand and appreciate.

He sees first the reason why so many fail to accomplish much in the great business of life.

Of the fact, there can be no reasonable doubt. Multitudes, on reflection, must feel and confess that they have done but little, if any, of that work which will bear the test of the final judgment, or such as will give joy to their souls in the eternal world. They must see and acknowledge that but few, if any, minds have been brightened by their instrumentality; that but few, if any, souls have been turned by them into the path of life. The widow and the fatherless; the benighted and the ignorant; the vicious and depraved will be unable to testify that these multitudes cared either for their bodies or their souls.

Now why is this? unless because trials have failed of their intended effect? These multitudes have not as yet been brought, by any of the various processes employed by the Providence and Spirit of God for that purpose, to the consciousness of what they are, and of the deep necessities of their immortal natures. Their hearts are still crusted over with worldliness: and so intense is their selfishness, that they cannot voluntarily be used for good purposes, with faculties that fit them to rise on the scale of moral worth, and to draw others after them; and with motives sweet as heaven, and awful as hell, stirring them to act worthy of the sons of eternity, they have nevertheless permitted themselves to move amid the scenes of time with the mental eye closed, and to act in the matter of accountability, as if to eat and drink were the whole duty of man, and as if death were an eternal sleep.

The reader cannot fail to perceive also from the position which he here occupies, that *great watchfulness and circumspection are needful, in order to know WHEN we are tried, and for WHAT purpose.*

Multitudes, no doubt, lose all the benefits of trials, through mere heedlessness; and many who are somewhat attentive, fail to derive advantage from an impression that great men are made only by great emergencies, and that those little everyday trials of their power of self-control, and of their habitual preferences are hardly worthy of notice, because they are supposed to exert but little influence in the formation of character. And yet does not the feather fluttering in the breeze show us the direction of the



wind as truly as the golden vane which turns with the shifting currents of the atmosphere? Life is made up of *little* things. The furniture of the most splendid minds has been gained by *little* and *little*. Habits of thought and action which are now as inexorable as the grave, received their first breath in some casual circumstance of childhood, which five minutes of reflection, or one word of warning, might have prevented.

It cannot, then, be too much insisted on, as one of the settled laws of Providence, that those only who are faithful in *little* things will be promoted to the management of *larger* trusts; and hence that every man who wishes to exert a wide and happy influence, or to meet with the approbation of his conscience and final Judge, should ever watch those *little* trials to which he is daily subjected—trials of his temper—of his tongue—of his judgment—of his preferences: he should ever be observant of the direction in which they point, and the feelings which they develop in his heart; and the kind of impulse they give to his conduct. For it is in such circumstances that character is rapidly forming, and the soul receives its education for eternity.

Moreover, the fact must have fallen under the observation of all, that every man at some time in his life has been brought into straits, from which he could not be extricated without unusual effort and self-denial. There was a lion in the way, or some more than ordinary obstruction, while at the same time his better judgment and the voice of Providence both bade him "Go forward, take up that cross; sacrifice your love of ease; fear not the roaring of the lion; advance with the determination to do your duty, at whatever cost." Now if, at this crisis, these admonitions are heeded, and the man goes heedfully but boldly ahead, he will come forth from the trial as gold—with twice his former value. He will have a consciousness of power, to which he was before a stranger; and if he bear subsequent trials with the same spirit, he will soon become a leading spirit in the community. But if, at this point, his courage fails him; if he turns and runs when he hears the lion roar, the question as to his advancement is in all probability for ever settled, and settled against him. From that hour he will find himself in the rear. The same discipline which elevates and fits his neighbor for service in the kingdom of truth, will no more extract good from his

character than the rain which falls on the deserts of Sahara will make them bud and blossom as the rose. Such facts cannot but impress us with the necessity of watchfulness, in order that we may see the bearings of every trial, and follow resolutely in the path to which they point.

This view, moreover, of the intended effect of providential discipline, presents the *character of God, as a moral governor, in a light peculiarly attractive*. It is not enough believed or remembered that God wishes his creatures well—that he desires every one of them to rise in the scale of moral worth—to run the race that is set before them so as to secure the glorious prize at the end—to do something which shall add to the lustre of their immortality. Hence, too often, we look upon trials as the impositions of a hard master; as something which interrupts the real business of life, and plants its pathway with thorns, when flowers would have done better.—So the froward child looks with an evil eye upon his father for attempting by correction to subdue his stubbornness, and induce a sweet submission to parental authority. But should the trial in this case succeed in its aim, he will bless his father for it all his days. In like manner, of the various discipline of Providence, if we answer to its design, we may say, in the language of an Apostle, "Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless afterward it worketh out the peaceable fruits of righteousness to them that are exercised thereby." This is a view of God, as attractive as it is just. It shows that his intentions in the trials he sends upon us are generous and kind, and that he is worthy of our unlimited confidence, even in life's darkest hour.

In closing this article, already too protracted, it only remains to dispose of a question which will naturally suggest itself to every mind—*What if men refuse to be in spirit and practice, what trials seek to make them?* Are we to conclude that the divine benevolence is so great and indiscriminating, as to save those from harm who continue stubborn under chastisement, and refuse to learn the lessons which are taught in the school of providential discipline? If the reader will turn, as we hope he will, to Luke 13, 6—9, he will find the answer; an answer which will impressively teach him that if trials fail to *make* the man, they will *mar* him for ever.

## THE GREY NUNS OF MONTREAL.

It was a bright morning, of the last month, when, with a party of friends, I rang at the gate of the Grey Nunnery at Montreal. I say it was a *bright* morning; and the sweet smiles of nature were so full of charms for me, that it made it doubly gloomy to look at the walls of a prison, where all the gentle aspirations of the soul for the beauty that reigns in the world are crushed, and hearts are bound in a dungeon whose doors never open for its prisoners to escape.

Over the great gate was this inscription in the French language, "*When my father and my mother forsake me, then the Lord will take me up.*" And I thought, surely they who dwell here, have not been forsaken by their parents, and cast on the cold charities of the world; rather they have deserted those whose love was their life in infancy, and to whom gratitude should have bound them by ties stronger than life itself. But I was not long in finding that there was a meaning to the inscription which I did not comprehend, and that one of the chief duties of the nuns is to take orphan children and bring them up, even from the helpless season of infancy, until they are old enough to be put to service.

The impression prevails generally among Protestants, that a *Nunnery* is a sealed prison, which none but the *initiated* may enter, and none of them escape. And this is true with respect to the private apartments of the nuns; but the rooms in which they are employed, are not only always open to inspection, but visitors are cordially received, and encouraged to come, inasmuch as these visits are often a source of no small profit to the establishment. During the travelling season, not a day passes without these convents receiving calls from many strangers, and every one is expected to purchase articles of fancy work, that are freely exhibited in every apartment which you enter.

On entering the convent, an old man, an invalid, was directed to show us through. He first introduced us to the chapel, a beautiful chapel, ornamented with many handsome paintings, chiefly of scenes in the life and death of the sinner's Saviour; and on the canvass he is usually presented in those attitudes, and under those circumstances, that draw the most powerfully upon the tender heart. In various parts of the chapel were nuns and invalids from the hospital, kneeling in profound, and, to all appearance, devout contemplation, if not adora-

tion, of the pictures of the Saviour or the Virgin Mary; and though a large party of strangers were walking around and conversing freely, the attention of the worshippers was not for an instant diverted. This was the morning devotion of souls taught to expect God's favor through the silent study of these images of his Son!

We were led to a long apartment—a hospital for sick men. The diseased were lying on curtained beds ranged in rows around the rooms, and the *sisters* were nursing them with tender care, supplying the immediate wants of those in pain, reading to those who would listen, and in various ways of kindness, seeking to relieve the distresses of those whom poverty and sickness had driven to this refuge. Another room, of the same appearance, was the hospital for females, and here a melancholy group of *old women*, wrinkled, withered, haggard, diseased and dying, were gathered; but around them was every comfort that sorrow could ask or kindness offer, so that, although hardship might have been their lot in life, they would find consolation as old age and death came on.

But the apartments that most interested us, were those filled with children who had been exposed and deserted by their unnatural parents, left in the streets to perish or to be picked up and brought to this asylum for the lost! In one room there were about fifty, two years old or thereabouts, each having its little cradle nicely furnished, some of them playing about the floor, and others sleeping; presenting a spectacle that could not be looked on without mingled emotions of astonishment and grief. In other rooms we found children of eight and twelve years of age, engaged in study under the instruction of these *sisters*, and on the faces of all was an air of cheerfulness contrasting strangely with the saddened feelings with which we looked upon the scene before us.

I conversed with some of the *sisters*, and sought to learn from them something of the state of mind with which they give themselves to this self-denying life. I did not feel, it is true, much confidence in the answers which I received, but I hoped to learn from the tone of the voice, the expression of the eye, or the hesitancy with which the reply should come, something more worthy of confidence than a form of words. But the victims of this miserable superstition seemed as "captives willing to be bound." They had tried the world and it

had deceived them; they had renounced its treacherous pleasures, and now in seclusion and mortifying toil they were rising above it, and living in the serene atmosphere of holy communion with God, preparing by deeds of righteousness to enjoy his future and everlasting favor. These were the fond and vain delusions by which they had been beguiled, perhaps had deceived themselves; and here beyond the reach of any human instrumentality to convince them of their delusion, and lead them to higher and purer fountains of truth and joy, they will live, and toil, and die.

Some of them are the children of wealth, and in youth they were the bright ornaments of the circle in which they shone as stars. Disappointment may have crossed their path, and driven them to a rash irrevocable vow. Or more likely, a romantic religious sentiment has gained possession of their hearts, and a false but masterly system of doctrine has bewildered their minds, and they find in this life of self-devotion, the promise of that exalted seraphic pleasure which the world cannot give! Delusive hope! How many hearts have been crushed under the disappointment that has come, when long years of seclusion within these walls have brought no joy to the soul thirsting ever for something never found! How many have said, as they look out of their small windows upon the clear light of heaven, and feel its breezes coming with the pure incense of nature to their cells, "O that I had the wings of a dove, that I might fly away and be at rest!"

While seeing these sisters, called the *grey* sisters from the color of the habit which they always wear, it was natural to think of the terrible power of the Church of Rome over the hearts of its votaries. What superstition is strong enough thus to tear these *sisters*, in the freshness of youth, when hope is buoyant and life is full of promise, from all that the world offers, and consign them to these walls! The superstition of Rome has its victims bound by as gross and lasting fetters, as ignorance and fanaticism ever forged. It seeks new victims, and finds them every year. Our own Protestant families furnish victims. Our parents place their children in the schools where this superstition is taught, the young heart is fascinated, and the unsuspecting youth is taken in an evil snare. Many have thus been seduced from the path of truth. I saw a father, but a few days since, whose daughter had just been buried alive! shut up in a nunnery to be his

daughter no more. It was her own choice, and he has himself to blame for having placed her within reach of the destroyer.

The stranger in Montreal, and indeed in any part of Canada, is powerfully impressed with the evidences that the Romish priesthood rules with a rod of iron. I spent some time in visiting the schools, churches, and other religious institutions of the city, and never before had any adequate conception of the strength of the system by which the papal hierarchy holds its subjects in fast allegiance. The early training of the youth in the principles of the faith they are to defend, the male and female seminaries, the nunneries, &c., these are the nurseries of the church, and it is for Protestants to draw a lesson of wisdom, and one of inestimable importance, from the care which the Romanists employ, to indoctrinate their children with the tenets of their peculiar creed.

If the public school is not the place in which the distinctive features of Protestantism are to be taught, there is a *school* where the strong doctrines of the gospel should be early and deeply implanted in the youthful mind. That school is at the fireside, in the parlor, in the nursery, around the family altar; and here, where everything combines to give strength and hope to the lessons taught, should the anxious parent seek to lead the child to a correct appreciation of the truths of his own system as opposed to the errors of Romanism; and not until the parent makes the attempt, will he know how easy it is to give his child a vivid idea of the difference between a religion of forms and one that works in the heart.

There are features of Romanism at which the intelligent child smiles in derision, when they are held up to his view, and almost every error of the system is so clearly at war with reason or revelation, that it requires no great cultivation of intellect or maturity of years, to understand the arguments by which they are met. And believing, as I do, that much of the opposition which has been made against Romanism in this country, has been ill-judged in its manner and measures, I would pray that the minds of Christian parents might be turned, more than they have ever yet been, to the necessity of an early instruction to prepare their children against the seductive wiles of the adversary, and to strengthen them for the great controversy, which is unquestionably coming on, in this country, between the enemies and friends of the truth.



# "I HAVE TRUSTED IN GOD."

MUSIC BY J. G. SALMEN, GENEVA.

I have trust - ed in God; his arm will sus - tain me; The

I have trust - ed in God; his arm will sus - tain me; The

I have trust - ed in God; his arm will sus - tain me; The

I have trust - ed in God; his arm will sus - tain me; The

Lord is my re - treat, and he will guard me still. There

Lord is my re - treat, and he will guard me still. There

Lord is my re - treat, and he will guard me still. There

Lord is my re - treat, and he will guard me still. There

is mer - cy in Christ, and no fear can at - tain me, While

is mer - cy in Christ, and no fear can at - tain me, While

is mer - cy in Christ, and no fear can at - tain me, While

is mer - cy in Christ, and no fear can at - tain me, While

trust - ing all to him I do his ho - ly will.

trust - ing all to him I do his ho - ly will.

trust - ing all to him I do his ho - ly will.

trust - ing all to him I do his ho - ly will.

## 2.

Though the path will be long, and the desert is dreary,  
 Though friends have left my side, and foes have crept around,  
 Yet I cry unto him, when my spirit is weary,  
 I cry to him, and soon my Comforter is found.

## 3.

I have trusted in God! when billows surround me,  
 I will not be alone; His hand will guide my bark;  
 Though the blackness of night should gather around me,  
 His light will show the path, and brighten what is dark.

C. W. B.

## THE PARLOR TABLE.

THE *Curiosities of Literature*, by D'ISRAELI, an elegant edition of which has been recently published, is one of the most ornamental and entertaining volumes on our table. Take it up when we will, and open it where we may, we ever find something to amuse or instruct. The very name is attractive, and such a gathering of rarities as this volume has, may be met in no other. *Griswold* has added to the collection of D'Israeli, a chapter of the curiosities of American Literature, but we have not been a *people* long enough to afford much matter for the picker up of oddities. Yet there are a few not unworthy of record. In old times they had a strange conceit for strange epitaphs. Here is one written by Benjamin Woodbridge on John Cotton in 1654.

Here lies magnanimous humility,  
Majesty, meekness, Christian apathy,  
On soft affections; liberty in thrall,  
A simple serpent, or serpentine dove—  
Neatness embroidered with itself alone,  
And devils canonized in a gown.  
A living, breathing Bible, table where  
Both covenants at large engraven are,  
Gospel and law in 's heart had each its column;  
His head an index to the sacred volume;  
His very name's a title page, and next  
His life a commentary on the text.  
Oh what a monument of glorious work,  
When in a *new edition* he comes forth,  
Without *errata*, may we think he'll be  
In *leaves* and *covers* of eternity.

The following lines are from the monument of the Rev. Richard Mather, who died in Dorchester, Mass., in 1669, aged 73.

Divinely rich and learned Richard Mather,  
Sons like him, prophets great, rejoiced his father;  
Short time his sleeping dust here's covered down,  
Not his ascended spirit or renown.

The lovers of quaint anecdote and sparkling wit will find in this elegant volume an exhaustless store.

In the "*Gems of Scottish Song*," we find but few to our taste, though others doubtless will discover beauties that are lost on us. But *this* is tender, and a mist seemed to be gathering in the region of our eyes as we read it.

### THE LONELY AULD WIFE.

Beside the old hearth she hath cherished for life,  
Silent and sad sits the lonely auld wife;  
Time hath left many a trace on her brow,  
But grief hath not troubled her spirit till now.

There are tears in her eyes, that are dim with age,  
And she looketh in vain on the holy page;  
But she canna see aught but an old arm chair,  
That vacant and lonely is standing there.  
Long ago when her bosom was swelling wi' pride,  
The lonely auld wife was a gay young bride;  
And the rose on her cheek wore its richest bloom,  
When she gave her hand to the joyous groom.  
Faded and worn is her beauty now,  
Grey are the hairs on her wrinkled brow;  
Silent she sits by the auld hearth stove,  
Sad are her thoughts—she is there alave.  
Her gudeman is gone to his dreamless rest,  
And the lonely auld wife hath a troubled breast,  
Yet not for the world would she banish away,  
The chair he hath sat in for many a day.  
She speaketh not save with a trembling breath,  
But hopeth and waiteth and prayeth for death;  
For joyless and dark are the days o' her life,  
When the gudeman is gone frae the lonely auld wife.

The works of Charlotte Elizabeth, with an introduction by Mrs. H. B. Stowe—Vol. 1. This volume contains—PERSONAL RECOLLECTIONS, OSRIC (a poem), THE ROCKITE, THE SIEGE OF DERRY, LETTERS FROM IRELAND, MISCELLANEOUS POEMS, accompanied with a fine engraving of Charlotte Elizabeth. By M. W. Dodd, New York. The works of this talented lady are highly and deservedly appreciated in this country. She writes like one who has seen and felt the influence of what she writes. And if she seems severe in some of her writings, that severity will find an apology in the depth of the evils which she attempts to portray. We hope this work will be read by every American.

Contributions of Q. Q., by the late JANE TAYLOR.—Messrs. SAXTON & MILES, 205 Broadway, have published in one handsome volume these well known papers, with some pieces not heretofore given. We can give our cordial recommendation to this book, and hope it may make an extended acquaintance among our young readers, for whose instruction and profit it is especially designed. Originally these "Contributions" made their appearance in an English Youth's Magazine, and were much admired for their excellent spirit, good sense and winning manner. Truths and duties the most trite and homely, are inculcated with so much freshness and force, yet with so little pretension, that whoever commences the volume will be reluctant to part with it. No young lady should fail to read Jane Taylor's writings, in a thoughtful frame, and with a self-cultivating purpose.







“Once in three years came the navy of Tharshish bringing gold  
and silver, ivory, apes, and peacocks.”

1 Kings 10:2

H. McVane



Lobelia Cardinalis.